





Amor meus crucifixus est.

EX LIBRIS MONASTERII

S. Birgitta de Sion,
CHUDLEIGH.

Manley

S. Bient-

Cancelled.





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RULE OF OUR MOST
HOLY SAVIOUR . . .
AND THE ADDITIONS

OF

THE MONASTERY OF SAINT SAVIOUR
AND ST. BRIDGET OF SYON. . . .

PRINTED FROM THE MSS. OF THE XVth CENTURY, IN
THE LIBRARY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM AND THE
LIBRARY OF ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, FOR THE SAME
MONASTERY OF SYON.

MCMXIV.

RULE OF OUR M
HOLY SAVIOUR
AND THE APOSTLES

THE MONASTERY OF
AND ST BRIGID

THE MONASTERY OF
THE APOSTLES OF THE
LIBRARY OF ST BRIGID
MONASTERY

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F. THOS. BERGH, O.S.B.,
Censor Deputatus.

IMPRIMATUR.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF PLYMOUTH.

May 25th, 1914.

We approve the issue of this Rule for Syon Abbey with two modifications: that Syon Abbey is only a House for Nuns and that its Confessors are appointed according to the common law of the Church.

✠ JOHN, BISHOP OF PLYMOUTH.

By Command of His Lordship the Bishop,

PATRICK BARRETT, Secretary.

May 25th, 1914.

CONFIRMATION.

BULL OF POPE URBAN VI., BY WHICH HE CONFIRMETH THE RULE OF
ST. SAVIOUR OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT BRIDGET.

Urban, Servant of the Servants of God, in perpetual memory :

We willingly, and for life, give permission to effect things prudently ordered. Pope Gregory VIII., our predecessor, was asked and humbly begged in the name of Dame Catherine, his daughter, to deign of his grace to confirm and approve these said Constitutions, foundation, building and endowment. Which Gregory above-mentioned ordered certain Priests, Clerks to the Holy Apostolic See, to examine the Constitutions under-mentioned, and also to enquire into the foundation and endowment : of which information they had to make a faithful report ; but before the final information was obtained, this same Gregory VIII., by the Divine Will, passed from this to a better life, and after that, the said daughter Catherine humbly begged that it would please us to confirm and approve by our chief authority the said foundation, building and endowment. For this end we have ordered, by Letters Patent, addressed to our dear brother Elzear, Priest and Cardinal of the Title of Saint Balbino, that he should diligently examine this aforesaid Constitution, foundation, building and endowment, and in the event of his finding the said Monastery reasonably founded, finally endowed, and sufficiently built, and the under-named Constitutions true, right and reasonable, he should admit and approve this foundation, building, and endowment, and declare and manifest the Constitutions to be just and reasonable.

Following on that order, the Cardinal Elzear, having taken wise counsel, and received final information of the aforesaid things, with other Cardinals, his brethren, Rectors of the Roman Church, and other Priests, Masters and Doctors of Holy Theology, and having approved and confirmed the said building and endowment, declared the under-named Constitutions to be just and reasonable, and that there was nothing in them to hinder or contradict the final orders, as he hath declared in certain letters on this matter, sent and sealed with his Cardinal's seal, in which are contained word for word the same Constitutions, which contents we have caused to be inserted in their entirety.

Wherefore, the above-named daughter hath humbly begged us to have this approbation, confirmation and declaration, made by the Cardinal, confirmed by our knowledge and special grace through

CONFIRMATION.

Apostolic Authority: to which we, willingly inclining, have confirmed, and do confirm, establish and approve, the aforesaid approbation, confirmation and declaration made by the aforesaid Cardinal Elzear, and, in addition, all that is contained in his letters, as shown by these present letters under our power as Pope. Let not anyone then upset this writing of our confirmation, or in rash boldness go contrary to it. For, if anyone should do this, let him know that he will incur the indignation of Almighty God, and His Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome on the Tiber, the 3rd December, the first year of our Pontificate.

RULE OF OUR MOST HOLY SAVIOUR.

THE SYON ADDITIONS.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE HOLDING OF THE CHAPTER, AND HOW FAULTS SHALL BE
PROCLAIMED AND AMENDED, AND OF THE MANNER OF TAKING
PENANCE.

FORASMUCH as we all offend in many things, it is needful that in many wise we be corrected therefor. Wherefore when the ordinary Chapter is held, the President shall come so thereto, that she may correct the faults of the Lay Sisters before the Choir Sisters come, they being there before and abiding her. And this Chapter shall be held with the same observance as the Choir Sisters' Chapter, except the reading. And if any more grievous fault be proclaimed in the Chapter, it shall be judged and corrected when the Choir Sisters are come. When, therefore, they come to their seats in the Chapter House, they shall incline religiously to the Majesty, and after, they shall incline a little to those between whom they shall sit.

If the Abbess hold the Chapter, all shall rise when she cometh, and as she goeth before them they shall incline. To another President they shall arise, but not incline. After this, when the President sayeth "Benedicite," they, bowing down somewhat their heads, shall answer: "Dominus," and when the President hath said: "Loquamur de ordine nostro," all that feel themselves guilty in any open fault, little or much, shall fall down prostrate before the President. To whom the President shall say: "Quid dicitis?" ("What say ye?") And then all they so prostrate shall answer, as it were with one voice: "Mea culpa." To whom the President shall say again: "Surgite!" ("Rise up!") And then forthwith they shall rise up and stand before the President in order, the eldest in the midst, who, inclining, shall acknowledge her faults, and after her every one of them do likewise in her order, saying their faults compendiously, plainly, audibly, that they may be clearly heard of all there, and also promise amendment.

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If any Searcher has whereof to proclaim any of them so standing before the President, she shall do so before that the President enjoin any penance to her whom she should proclaim.

When the President has given her judgment, and commanded her to go to her place, she shall first incline and then go to her place.

She that shall proclaim another shall not in the proclamation speak darkly or covertly, but she shall say openly and plainly the fault and the name of her that did it, having her face and words directed to the President.

None shall proclaim another of pure suspicion or hearing only, unless she express the person of whom she had it, and also the same person be then present. None shall proclaim another of any fault that she may not prove by two or three witnesses at least upon her that she proclaimeth in case that she would deny it; as she will eschew the same pain due to her accused if she were found guilty by her own confession, or by sufficient proof afore expressed.

Nevertheless, lest through hiding of such vices be had boldness to sin, and the sin be not punished for lack of such proof, whereby the vengeance of God very greatly grow, she that seeth or heareth such faults oughteth to notify them to the Superior, who may by other lawful and honest means wisely and warily cure such sores.

When the Choir Sisters are come and the Lesson is read, if any Sister hath been sick, and is recovered of her sickness, and will join the Convent and their labours, she shall first rise and take her veyne for her fault and omissions in the time of her sickness.

And when she hath taken her penance, she shall go to her place. And after this when the President biddeth the Lay Sisters go their way, they shall go forth out of the Chapter House. Nevertheless, if the Chanter or any of the Searchers have whereof to proclaim any of them, they shall do it before they go forth.

And whosoever is proclaimed shall not speak in her place, but shall arise forthwith, and take her penance before the President. To whom the President shall say, "Quid dicitis?" ("What say ye?") And she that lieth prostrate, if she be guilty, shall answer: "Mea culpa." And when she is risen she shall meekly say her fault, and meekly take her correction, and go to her place when she is commanded. Moreover, if any be proclaimed and is found guilty whilst she standeth before the President, she shall not take her penance again for any fault, but say this: "It is so, mea culpa; I will amend me." Nevertheless, if it pass light faults, or she will excuse herself of the faults proclaimed as to her knowledge therein, not guilty, or else while she standeth there she trespasseth in her deportment or in her words, in such cases she

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must take her penance again, and not else. In those things she cannot feel herself guilty, she shall answer: "*Domina, cum licentia vestra non recordeo.*" ("With your licence, I have not on mind that I said or did so.") It shall not be lawful to any to excuse herself otherwise.

But she oughteth to think in herself that she is guilty before God in full many other trespasses, and perhaps more grievous, which in this life or after must be purged.

And, therefore, she should accept meekly what the President enjoins her; but if the fault put upon her be such that she should lose thereby the esteem of her Sisters, or others be greatly hurt in her, in such cases it shall be lawful for any person so accused and not guilty meekly to excuse her in few words and soft.

In the Chapter none shall defend her own cause, nor the cause of another, nor shall speak there, but the President, the Chantress, and the Searchers, and they that confess their own faults, and also they that are charged to speak or else have licence to speak. And the answer shall be but only on that that is asked of them.

There, no Sister shall speak in a high voice or inordinately, nor dishonestly, nor wrathfully; none shall speak between themselves one to the other, even if it be in a low voice, or make any token or beckoning from one side to the other, or smilingly or wrathfully behold another; she that doeth otherwise and is perceived shall be proclaimed, corrected, and punished like as for any other fault.

So that any word in the Chapter shall naught else savour but correctness of living, health of souls, keeping of the Order, and the common profit.

None shall be so bold as to absent her from the Chapter or Collation without special licence, except the sick lying in the Infirmary.

Who shall take the long veyne, she must kneel first upon her left knee and after upon her right knee, and then forthwith lay herself down straight, somewhat more resting to the right side than to the left, but not notably so. Placing the outer part of the left foot upon the sole of the right foot, and the back of the left hand upon the palm of the right hand, bringing her hands in this wise between her face and the earth.

But she that shall take the short veyne must first kneel down upon both her knees, falling down easily upon her elbow, and lay her face resting upon her hands between her face and the earth.

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CHAPTER II.

OF LIGHT FAULTS.

- 1.—It is a light fault if any when it is rung to any hour of Divine Service doth not leave any manner of business that may be left without hurt, and come speedily and ordinally thereto. By the word “speedily” is not understood “running,” but “without delay”; and by the word “ordinally” is understood “religiously”; that is to say, that she come without great noise and dissolution, and in her habit honestly;
- 2.—If any after that she faileth in reading or singing in the Choir, humble not herself kneeling down to the ground religiously;
- 3.—If any presume to read or sing otherwise in the Choir than is written as noted unto her in the corrected books, after the use and custom of this religion;
- 4.—If the Hebdomadary or any other Choir Sister that sing come not so long time before the beginning of Divine Service, as the “Pater Noster” and “Ave Maria” may be trebly said;
- 5.—*The Whole Habit.* If any come to Divine Service or to Indulgete, Seven Psalms, Confession, Procession, Communion, Chapter, “De Profundis,” or Collation, or, generally, to any conventual act used in the Monastery without her whole habit.
- 6.—If any have aught assigned unto her to read or sing, and doth not prepare it before, or fulfilleth it not attentively;
- 7.—If she that hath keeping of the books, through her negligence any book lack that should be used in singing or reading in the Choir, Refectory, or Chapter;
- 8.—If any be negligent in Divine Service, or by lightly looking about, or by any unreligious demeanour of head, eyes, hands, or feet, show thus any lightness, or sluggishly sleep, or be careless in any conventual act;
- 9.—If any in the Choir in time of Divine Service, or time of Chapter, or Collation, or the Refectory in time of reading, conventual refection, or drinking, or in their cells in time of rest, make any noise or unrest;
- 10.—If any shall carelessly or unreligiously handle the ornaments of the Altar, or of the Church, or break, or damage or lose the

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vessels or other things belonging to the Monastery under what title soever they are called.

- 11.—If any come not in due time to common observance, that is to say, if they come to Chapter after the time the Blessing is given, or “De Profundis” begun before Collation, when it is said for any person late deceased, or else come to the Refectory when Grace is begun before meat, supper, or drinking ;
- 12.—If any damage any book in any place, or use it dishonestly ;
- 13.—If any lightly break silence ;
- 14.—If any speak in a loud voice ;
- 15.—If any be given to giddiness or vain speech, or much speech, or else of negligence sayeth aught whereby others be hurt ;
- 16.—If any find anything not hers, and taketh it not to her to whom pertaineth the use thereof, or to her office, or else layeth not in such place where such things be assigned by the Superior to be laid ;
- 17.—If any take anything out of other’s office without leave, or go into any Sister’s cell except her own without a reasonable cause, or else in any place that is forbidden to enter ;
- 18.—If any be found negligent in their Office or Ministration ;
- 19.—If any behave them in Chapter otherwise than is expressed in these Additions ;
- 20.—If any miskeep her things, clothes, or others, or else rent them, break or injure them ;
- 21.—If any laugh dissolutely, or stir any other by word or deed to do the same ;
- 22.—If any wash not or take not her clothes to washing in due time, nor in due time changeth them like as common custom and honesty of religion will ;
- 23.—If any Sister speak irreverently to another, or call or name another without this word just before, *Sister*, or any such other word according to her state and degree ;

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- 24.—If any carelessly hurt or cut their hand or finger, or spill anything upon the table, whereby the cloth is stained, or else take any meat or drink without Blessing or saying Grace, or else taketh it out of due time openly in the sight of others, or out of due place ;
- 25.—If any Sister not being in office herself, wilfully and without licence speak or see seculars, when any of them be within the Clausura ;

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CHAPTER III.

OF GRIEVOUS FAULTS.

- 1.—It is a grievous fault if any sister officer, or other licensed to speak at any place, hear or minister froward words with them at any time; and the same is to be observed and kept to all others, especially to outward strangers;
- 2.—If any bear false witness against another, or be found lying made wilfully and of purpose;
- 3.—If any despise the common doctrine set of the Holy Fathers, and given to them of their Superior for to be kept, or be too negligent to keep them;
- 4.—If any defend or maintain her own fault, or the fault of another, in the Chapter, or in any other place;
- 5.—If any reprove another of her fault for which she was corrected, or else maliciously or scornfully rehearse it after the correction;
- 6.—If any say any threatening, or irreligious words to her, or of her of whom she is proclaimed;
- 7.—If any Sister say any words of despite, reproof, or shame to any Sister;
- 8.—If any of malice show the evils that any Sister hath done;
- 9.—If any lie in wait, or spy, or else slyly and curiously search what other Sisters speak between themselves, that they afterwards may reveal or show the saying of the speaker, to their great hurt;
- 10.—If any sow discord amongst the Sisters;
- 11.—If any be found a backbiter;
- 12.—If any unreasonably murmur or stir up others to murmur about food or any other thing;
- 13.—If any, save Sister to Sister, and except the keeper of the locutories, wheels, grates, gates, or entries into the Clausura, and yet not they but for their office only, be found to speak alone, Confession only universally excepted—or else if any when they have leave to speak take any other with them than such and the same whom the Superior assigneth.
- 14.—If any bring in any tidings without leave of the Superior;
- 15.—If any break the fasts of this religion without leave of the

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- Superior, or else the fasts of the Church without the leave and dispensation of the Confessor ;
- 16.—If any without leave of the Superior go into others' cells when there is no need, or receive anything of any that hath not the care of the ministration of the same thing, and also she that giveth it without leave ;
- 17.—If any having ministration of things necessary, and having sufficiently in her office to give to the needy, do not duly and charitably minister the necessaries that be asked in due times and due places ;
- 18.—If any commandingly, menacingly, or unrestfully ask the necessaries, or else out of due time and place, when the need might forbear, and also if any when they receive new things will not deliver up the old ;
19. - If any having charge of the gates and doors of Clausuras, leave them unshut without some keeper of the same either within or without ;
- 20.—If any be accustomedly fallen into light faults.

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CHAPTER IV.

OF MORE GRIEVOUS FAULTS.

- 1.—If it is a more grievous fault if any of pride or open rebellion be disobedient to her Superior, by one whole day, or else strive with her, or shall maliciously say any evil of her ;
- 2.—If any say words of injury to her Abbess, or any of the Searchers ;
- 3.—If any Sister sow discord between Sister and Sister, or between the Abbess and Confessors ;
- 4.—If any when they fall chiding or striving together, if the Abbess or any Searchers say thus, “*Sit nomen Domini benedictum,*” will not cease, striking themselves upon the breast, answering and saying meekly and with a soft spirit, “*Mea culpa,*” or, “*Ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum,*” and so utterly cease ;
- 5.—If any be found in any suspect place, speaking with any Clerics or with any secular person, man or woman ;
- 6.—If any publish or reveal the secrets of religion to any outward person ;
- 7.—If any menace by look or word, to smite another at any time ; or to avenge her own injury, or else by ungodly words reproach another of her country, kindred, or any other misfortune or chance faults at any time ;
- 8.—If any do any theft or sacrilege ;
- 9.—If any without licence and knowledge of her Abbess send out or receive from without any letter or gift ;
- 10.—If any of contempt break the fasts or abstinence of the Church or of the Rule ;
- 11.—If any use sorcery or witchcraft ;
- 12.—If any without knowledge and leave of the Abbess, let or bring into the Clausura any outward person, even if the person be not suspect ;

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- 13.—If any to the defence of her own trespass, or any other, rehearse laws, or allege them or induce others so to do, or speak lightly of wrong doing ;
- 14.—If any with violence break any door or lock, or open it without licence and commandment of the Abbess ;
- 15.—If any be a frequent doer of grievous faults.

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CHAPTER V.

OF MOST GRIEVOUS FAULTS.

- 1.—It is a most grievous fault if any be convicted of propriety, for the which penance is stated in the rule ;
- 2.—If any forsake obstinately to accept and fulfil the penance enjoined her by the President ;
- 3.—If any stand inobedient and rebel to her Abbess two whole days ;
- 4.—If any conspire against her Abbess, or be confederate or work for the subversion of the Order or the destruction of the privileges, ordinary injunctions, constitutions, additions, and statutes, or else, of ambition, rancour, or hate, labour to the privation of the Prioress, Searcher, or any Officer of the Order ;
- 5.—If any steal or destroy any common register or common evidence, or else put out or set in anything in the common register or common books, without the common deliberation and consent.
- 6.—If any send out letter of affection or of slander of any persons, or thereto make prose or rhymes inward or outward ;
- 7.—If any lay violent hands upon her Abbess, or spitefully smite or wound her or any Sister, though she raise no blood of them, else make any purpose to smite by sign or token, lifting up her fist, stick, staff, stone, or any other weapon whatever it be, or push or spurn any Sister from her with arms, shoulders, hands or feet violently in wreaking her wrath.
- 8.—If any be found so incorrigible that neither she dreads to do trespass nor fulfilleth the penance that is enjoined her for her faults, or else openly refuseth to do her penance, such a person must be dismissed lest one ill sheep infect the flock. For other most grievous faults they shall not be spoken in Chapter, but to the Superior privately.

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CHAPTER VI.

OF THE PRESIDENT.

By the name of President is understood any person that among the Convent gathered together in any conventual act hath then the rule of the religion at least for that season; for they that be so gathered be never without a President.

The Abbess is President in every place, and, she absent, the Prioress is President; she absent, the eldest Searcher; all these three being absent, the second Searcher; and so descending by all the Searchers, which, all absent, the eldest Sister then there present is President.

The President, whoever it be, in the absence of the Abbess, shall do that the Abbess should do if she were there present, except in cases specially and only reserved to the Abbess.

And who that ever be President—be it Abbess or other—in her judgments about them that trespass and fall into faults, she oughteth to have great care and wariness, knowing well that the physician is not needful to them that be whole, but to them that be sick and ill at ease. Wherefore, she oughteth to consider discreetly and to ponder wisely the greatness of the trespass with all the circumstances thereof, and also the dispositions of the persons that do it, and thereafter, if she know it to be expedient, to enjoin the penance after her discretion.

But in nowise she ought to leave behind the doctrine of the holy Apostle St. Paul, which he teacheth all Superiors how they shall behave them to the subjects, saying thus: "Reprove sharply, beseech gently, blame severely."

- 1.—She reproveth trespassers sharply, when she, before other persons, giveth monition to such as be unrestful, or keep not their Rule, or be negligent in many things, charging them allwise that they amend themselves.
- 2.—She beseecheth gently, when she goodly exhorteth them of the infirmity, fall, or sin, that they have more wariness to keep themselves from such falls, and to make them strong, that they may not so easily fall, or else when she prayeth them that be obedient, mild, and patient to persevere and continue and to increase therein.
- 3.—But she blameth severely, when she severely reprehendeth them that sin and trespass of purpose, of certain malice and contempt, or of long-rooted custom.

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Nevertheless, all this is to be done with measure and somewhat in the spirit of softness, lest the guilty, through too much blaming, be so greatly troubled that she will not gladly admit the wholesome penance that is enjoined her for her faults.

Wherefore, the manner of the President is to be mannerly, meek, and serious, and the sound of voice somewhat low, and she ought to be universal to all and not partial, and inasmuch as in her is, she ought to win all to God; and therefore some time due correction is to be deferred to another time, for the great trouble of her that deserveth sharply to be blamed. Yet the correction is never to be omitted, and that for two causes. One cause is, that if the guilty will not amend herself she is to be forced and constrained thereto by pains until in time she cease to sin, for Holy Scripture says: "A fool is never chastised by words." And therefore it is necessary that such be chastened by pains to the deliverance of their souls.

Another cause is, that if the guilty be incorrigible, yet by due punishment it is provided for the common good; for when the Convent seeth that the order of justice is kept, they ought not to be worse by the ill example of any such, but rather they ought to refrain themselves, and be more afraid to do evil.

The President hath need to be wise, wary, and patient, that in the execution of regular correction and discipline she may reduce the infected sheep and the misruled into regular and holy conversation, and injure not them that be whole and well ruled. The Abbess only giveth sentence and judgment in other than light faults, unless she commit openly before witness the power to another President.

So that another President than the Abbess, if such faults come before her, ought to reserve them to the decision of the Abbess, without whose counsel and precept known also to some other Sisters, she shall not deliver any great thing, nor settle any new thing, but all such matters she shall assign to the decision of the Abbess. Nor shall she in any place take the Abbess' seat, but in the Chapter, and at the Collation and in the Refectory she shall keep her own side, sitting at the end of the same bench, upon which the Abbess hath her seat. But in the Choir she shall keep her own stall, as she should do if she were not President, but at Graces, in the absence of the Abbess, she shall stand above on her own side, both in Refectory and in the Church, and so shall she go to the Church, and come again to the washing of hands, though she shall be the youngest of all the Order.

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CHAPTER VII.

OF ADMITTING BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE CHAPTER.

Any man or woman, meekly, devoutly, with insistence, and in the way of charity, asking to be admitted and received to be a Brother or Sister of our Chapter, permission asked and had once for ever of the whole congregation of Sisters and Brothers in special or in general, the Abbess being at the grate may say alone, or with any there present, this Psalm: "Deus misereatur nostri," or else this Psalm: "Ad te levavi," with Gloria Patri, Kyrie Eleison. Christe Eleison. Pater Noster. Ave Maria, Et ne nos. Ostende nobis. Oremus pro fratribus et sororibus nostris. Domine exaudi. Oremus. Actiones nostras quæsumus Domine, aspirando praeveni et adiuvando prosequere, ut cuncta nostra oratio et operatio a te semper incipiat et per te cœpta finiatur. Per Christum dominum nostrum. Amen.

This done, she may exhort them thus if she thinks it expedient or otherwise, like—"In the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother, Our Lady Saint Mary, and of Our Holy Mother Saint Bridget and of all Saints, and in the name of all the whole congregation of Sisters and Brothers, we, considering the love you have to us and to our Order, and the fervent devotion by which you desire the suffrages of our congregation, I admit and receive you to be partner of all spiritual subsidies of our Monastery: that is to say, of prayer, fastings, disciplines, and of all other good deeds, which it pleaseth Our Lord Jesus of His grace and mercy to work by us and by our successors. Granting you as freely as we may, with His pleasure, in life and in death, full and perpetual participation of all the aforesaid things. Adding, moreover, that when knowledge of your decease cometh to us, or to our successors, the same suffrages shall be done for you that from the beginning of our religion have been wont to be done for the Sisters and Brothers of our Chapter. Continue, therefore, in your goodwill towards us, and when you perceive that any hurt is likely come to our Monastery, if you may, prevent it, that we may escape harm, and have cause to love you and to pray for you more heartily."

Or else thus:—"In the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of His Most Blissful Mother, Our Lady Saint Mary, I admit you to be partakers of all spiritual subsidies of this Monastery. In Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen."

And afterwards the names of such persons are to be set in the book of the Fraternity, which is named "Codex Caritatis." And

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if they of their own motive and freewill do any benefit of notable substance to the Monastery, this ought to be written with their names ; and they shall be reckoned amongst the benefactors.

Our own carnal father and mother, brother and sister, and other of our near kindred be Brethren and Sisters by our entrance into this religion, and shall have same suffrages that others have, though they have never of themselves asked to be members of the Fraternity.

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CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE DEAD AND HOW THEY SHALL BE BURIED.

When any Sister be passed to God the body shall be laid upon a bare board ordained thereto—covered with lead if need be—and it shall be washed with warm water by them that have care of the Infirmary, and by other serious persons such as the Abbess may appoint there, which done they shall clothe the body with stamin, cowl, and mantle, without rule habit, but with shoes and girdle, and stockings. These shall all be old, not new, and in all except the mantle she shall be buried.

After the body is thus arrayed it shall be laid upon a bier and covered with a cover of wide lattice, so that the body may be seen, and so it shall be brought to the Choir, Chapter, or other convenient place, and the body shall never be without two Sisters at least praying for the soul, saying the Psalter, or Dirge, or any other prayers, nor shall it be at any time left alone until the burial. Before the body shall be buried shall be said a Mass of Requiem for the soul.

OF SUFFRAGES FOR THE DEAD.

When any Sister or Brother is passed, each day, thirty days together, at Graces after meat and supper, shall be said for a Sister the prayer, "Quæsumus Domine," for a Brother, if Priest, "Præsta quæsumus;" if not a Priest, "Inclina Domine," before "Absolve quæsumus Domine."

And every Sister each of the thirty days at Mass time shall say three Paters and three Aves—one while the Priest says the Collects, another before the Preface, and the third while he says the last Collects, or they can be said at another time, provided the ninety Paters and Aves are said by the end of the month.

Also, besides this, each Sister shall say for any Sister or Brother so passed, the David Psalter thrice and six Dirges—three in Choir and three privately—and their Orbits shall be read every year as they fall in the Martyrology.

Moreover, if any die before the first Mass in the morning, the same day shall begin the reckoning of the first of the thirty days. If they pass after the first Mass, the reckoning shall begin on the morning following, but the thirty days shall always keep their course.

When the body shall be brought to the Church the bell shall be rung and all stand in the Cloister procession-wise, the Abbess and eldest Sister next the bier, and so they shall follow the body to the Church.

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OF THE DIRGE WHEN THE BODY IS PRESENT.

Before Dirge two tapers at least shall be lit in the Church to burn from the beginning to the end. In which Dirge for every body present the Abbess shall execute the Office, saying the prayers and reading the last lesson. But other lessons shall be read of other Sisters, warned and assigned, by the Chantress each time, and on the morning all the hours shall be said before High Mass of Requiem. The Abbess shall also execute the office for the Month's Mind, Anniversaries of Bishops, Kings, Lords, Abbesses, General Confessors, and such others, but all other Dirges shall be executed by the Hebdomadary of that week.

When the body is to be brought to Church the bells shall be rung for one Miserere at least, and the Chapter bell for one Pater Noster, and the Holy Water and best Cross shall go before without tapers, the torches lighted and the Thurifer shall follow after, before the Choir all in regular habit except the Confessor, the eldest going before, all being done according to the Roman Ritual.

If it is the body of an Abbess or Confessor-General it shall be borne by Priests or Deacons, if it may be, or else by brethren, with two torches before and two behind, for the burial of all others there shall be only two torches which shall be carried before the body.

The body shall be borne to the grave as it was brought to Church, the Holy Water, Cross, and Censer and youngest Sisters going before, and the body with torches following, the Choir all in regular habit except the Confessor and his Deacon. At the grave the Cross and torches shall stand at the feet, and the Holy Water and Censer shall stand by the Priest at the head of the grave.

To Dirge when the body is present, all bells shall be rung two peals, the first the while of four Misereres, and the second one Miserere, and they shall be rung in the morning to Lady Mass and High Mass, and after the Gospel as on All Souls Day.

OF DEFERRING OF DIRGES.

If any Sister dies on Christmas Eve, or from thence till the Octave of St. Stephen, or from Saturday in Passion Week till Monday after Octave of Easter, or from the Friday before Whitsunday to the morning after Trinity Sunday, or at any like time, the solemn Dirge shall be deferred until such time as may be most conveniently had. Save that two Sisters at least assigned by the Abbess shall say Dirge together by the body, but the thirty days and year's day shall never be deferred.

To Dirge without note the great bell shall be rung, and to Requiem Mass in the morning the space of three Misereres, and when

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four tapers burn about the hearse at Dirge, they shall also burn at Requiem Mass, Lady Mass and High Mass.

FOUNDER'S DIRGE.

From the Feast of St. Austin till the founder's obit be done, the best apparel of SS. Peter, S. Saviour, and Our Lady's Altars shall hang without relics, candlesticks, or best carpets. Moreover the chief candlesticks and principal tapestries shall be had at the said obit, but no relics.

The hearse shall be covered with Cloth of Gold, and four tapers standing about, and two upon the Altar at Dirge time. At Magnificat and Benedictus the Altar shall be censured, and therefore the Confessor shall be in chief cope, and his stall arranged as is wont on principal feasts. From the censuring of the Altar and hearse till Collects be ended, the taperers shall hold the tapers turned towards the cross whilst the said hearse is incensing. The bell shall be rung as they would for a corpse present.

DIRGE FOR ABBESS OR CONFESSOR.

For Abbesses and Confessors the High Altar, Our Lady's Altar, and the bier shall be arranged the same as for the Founder's Dirge.

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CHAPTER IX.

OF THE VISITATION OF THE BISHOP.

The Bishop shall visit every three years when he visits his Diocese. But he shall never visit (if it may be) but in his proper person, having with him two or three serious persons, of which one shall be a religious man of the Order of St. Benedict or Bernard, chosen by the Abbess with the Council of six. But no layman shall enter with the Bishop in his visitation, except he be called by the Sisters' consent together with the Bishop for some special cause, which may not be discussed without the counsel of such a man.

When, therefore, the Bishop shall visit, he must send before his letters of citation, and when he cometh to visit, he shall be received reverently with ringing of bells and procession. After the Office in Church, he shall go to the door of the Monastery, which door opened the Abbess with the Convent shall receive him reverently, going processionally before him to the Chapter house, and when he cometh to the Chapter, they shall kneel to him as he goeth before them, and when he hath taken his seat, he shall make the Abbess sit at his right hand and command all others to sit, his clerks sitting before him on the carpet.

This done, the Bishop shall say "Benedicite," and the Convent shall answer "Dominus." Then he shall publish the cause of his coming, and after that he may propose unto them three things to be kept of all. *First*, that none depose to him, or any that cometh unto him, anything already corrected and amended. *Second*, that none say any grievous thing of the Abbess, or any Sister whereof they have not been charitably forewarned, nor that they depose aught, or accuse any, but only of such things that have been done since the last visitation. *Third*, that none of wickedness or evil will defer anything which they know to be amended, and reserve it to the coming of the Visitor, for all faults are to be proclaimed and corrected in due time as they fall. Wherefore they that do the contrary shall be grievously corrected by the Visitor that all others be afraid to do so at any time.

After this the Visitor shall say in this wise to them: "We command you in the virtue of Holy Obedience that you tell us truly of all the things that we have to examine and ask you of.

ARTICLES THAT THE VISITOR SHALL EXAMINE ON HIS VISITATION.

- 1.—If the regular number of Sisters be complete, and if not what is the cause thereof;
- 2.—Also if Divine Service be duly done after the religion, and devoutly, and if the Sisters that are not sick hear Mass daily;

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- 3.—If it be rung in due and correct time to the said service, and if all come thereto that may ;
- 4.—If there be had sufficient books for Divine Service ;
- 5.—If the Church be served with lights and proper ornaments as religion requires ;
- 6.—If the Sacraments be duly and charitably administered to the sick and to the whole that devoutly ask them ;
- 7.—If the yearly Dirge of the Founders and other Dirges for Sisters and Brethren deceased be duly observed when they fall ;
- 8.—If regular fasts and abstinences, silence, and other observances of the Order be duly kept in times and places ordained thereto ;
- 9.—How the Sisters be occupied when they be not at Divine Service, nor at other Conventual observance ;
- 10.—If there be any discord or controversy between the Sisters among themselves, and how and of whom it arose, and by whom it is nourished ;
- 11.—If any be accused of conspiracy against the Abbess, or Searchers, or against any Sister ;
- 12.—If any accuse another of a notable fault that they cannot prove ;
- 13.—If any detract the Abbess or any Sister to outward persons ;
- 14.—If there be an inventory or register of the books of the library, and how they and other books of study be kept and repaired ;
- 15.—If the Chapter be duly kept after the Rule and other times when need is, and regular corrections had therein ; or, if any be found rebellious and disobedient to the Abbess, or refuse to take corrections, and how such be punished ;
- 16.—If the Abbess, and all other Presidents and Searchers treat religiously and charitably their Sisters as they ought to do ;
- 17.—If the Abbess or Prioress be accused of any crime, or of dilapidation of the goods of the Monastery against the prohibition of the Pope in the Twelfth Article of the Bull ;
- 18.—If the Abbess make alienation of immovable goods, or of any other things against the Pope's prohibition ;
- 19.—If all regular clothing, both to the bed and body, and all other necessaries be duly ministered by the Abbess or by her Officers to the Sisters after their need as the Pope hath ordained ;
- 20.—If the Sisters be served charitably and with a good-will in due and convenient times of their necessities ;

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- 21.—How the Muniments of the Monastery and the common seals be kept, and by whom, or if any selling be made with common seal without certain knowledge and consent of the Convent, or of the greater part of the Sisters, as the Pope hath ordained ;
- 22.—How the Infirmary be kept, and how the sick be treated, and if they be served competently without grudging ;
- 23.—If the due distribution of the leavings and broken meat be made to the poor in due time ;
- 24.—If that after sufficient endowment and the building of the Church and Monastery, the necessary expenses of the year present, and of the year next to come are reckoned, all that remaineth over be devoted every year to the poor as the Rule will.

The said examination made, the Visitor shall proceed to the Visitation after the power given him by the Rule and the Pope.

If so be that it be answered of all to the Bishop that all things be well, he ought to rejoice greatly and to thank God, and so bless them all, and go out as he came in. If their answer be otherwise, he shall proceed forth in his act of Visitation, hearing attentively what is said to him or to any of his Clerks.

OF THE VISITOR'S INJUNCTIONS AND CORRECTIONS AFTER HIS VISITATIONS.

And when all be heard that will come, he shall show and publish such faults as are to be corrected in such wise as he seemeth best.

But the corrections, penances and pains that are to be enjoined to the trespassers he shall commit the execution thereof to the Abbess, or to the more serious part of the Sisters, as the Pope hath ordained, which ordinance is to be read in all wise among the Sisters on the day before the Bishop's Visitation as it standeth in Chapter X. of these Additions.

The Bishop shall enjoin the Abbess, in virtue of Holy Obedience, that she have none of her Sisters in hate or less charitably treat them for anything they have deposed or said against her in the Visitation.

Also he shall enjoin the Sisters likewise that they love not the Abbess less, nor withdraw from her due obedience and reverence in everything. And that no Sister reprove another, or revenge her upon another, or grieve another for anything said or deposed in the Visitation.

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CHAPTER X.

FOR WHAT CASES THE BISHOP OR ANY OTHER PERSON SHALL ENTER INTO THE MONASTERY.

Martinus episcopus servus servorum Dei, et caetera.

For a perpetual memory we will and command that the Bishop of the Dioceses, in whose cities or dioceses such manner of Monasteries and places exist, or in time to come may exist and be built in this realm of England, that they do in all ways their ordinary Offices after the powers that the Rules and Constitution of the same Orders granteth them. By the which Rule and Constitution it is ordained and disposed that the Bishop of the Diocese shall be Father and Judge in all cases and causes that touch the Sisters and Brothers, and also Visitor and Proctor of the said Monasteries to the end that the Rule be kept.

Nevertheless, we will that the said Bishop in no wise give out any manner of excommunication, suspense, or interdict, general or special, upon any person of the said Monasteries without commission and special commandment of our See, nor that they ask any costs of them, nor vex them unduly, nor trouble them in any wise unlawfully under pain of excommunication if they be warned to cease and will not. Which Bishops yet by our sovereign authority we straightly bid and command that they see the Rule and Statutes be kept of the Order inviolably in every part, as is said before. And also we ordain that when they visit only personally, it shall be lawful for them to enter into the Monastery with other two or three serious men and honest, and so to exercise the Office of Visitation as well among Sisters as Brothers in due manner and in due place after the law and due exigence of the Rule. To whom also it is lawful in doubtful cases of religion to ask counsel of well-named and famed persons, professed Monks of the Order of St. Benedict or St. Bernard, and so for to visit, and that only from three years to three years; but if he is called before the third year for an evident and profitable cause of the Abbess, with the serious part of the Sisters, or of the serious part of the Sisters without the Abbess, or else of the General Confessor with the serious part of the Brothers, or of the serious part of the Brothers without the Confessor, for then be it lawful to him to come and visit in the manner aforesaid. Or else if it happen (as God forbid) that such trespasses and faults so increase in the Monastery that it break out unto the great slander and injury of the Monastery, and the Abbess and Confessor General, knowing the faults, dissimulate feignedly to correct them, be it in themselves or in any other, then be it lawful to

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the aforesaid Bishops of the Diocese, though they be not called before the third year, keeping the conditions of the Rule, as for all other things, to visit, and with due discretion, to correct what ought to be corrected and reformed, as often as it needeth in such other like cases as is rehearsed before.

Willing, nevertheless, that the said Diocesan, or any other by their leave, or yet in no otherwise than it is rehearsed, taking upon them the Office of Visitation, ought thereto be bound to commit the execution of the corrective penances and pains enjoined by them to them that have trespassed in the Monastery to the Abbess for the Sisters, and to the General Confessor for the Brothers, if they may profitably by them be executed; or else to a Sister for the Sisters, and to a Brother for the Brothers, as to the serious party of either, so it may be executed by them so that in no wise they shall commit the execution of such conviction, sentences and pains to any other. And when any Bishop is called to visit he shall enter and visit that part, and no more, to which he was called.

None other shall enter the enclosure, except it be necessary, as Physicians, workmen, labourers, and such others. And when they enter they shall do so with some prudent extern person of the household, if need be, excepting the Physicians, so that the Sisters be not molested by them, and if possible they are not to be seen by any except by the Sisters who shall show them such things that must be made or repaired, and those who receive medicines or minister any medicines to the sick, even though they speak not to them, and this for divers reasons. None that enter the enclosure shall on any account remain there all night, whatever cause may happen.

The Bishop may enter for the consecrating of Churches, Church-yards, Chapels, and for the Consecration of Abbesses, and for Professions, or for any other ordinary act to be done in the Monastery, that can only be done by a Bishop.

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CHAPTER XI.

HOW OFFICERS SHALL BE PUT IN AND TAKEN OUT.

Among the Sisters these Officers are to be had : Prioress, Searchers, Chantress and Sub-Chantress, Vesteer, Sacristan, Under-Sacristan, Treasurer, Cellaress, Infirmarian, Keeper of the Washing House, Keeper of the Garden and Fruits thereof, Keeper of the Buttery, and of the Refectory, Keeper of the Wheel, Keeper of the Grates, Keeper of the Cloister Doors, with all such other Officers whom the Abbess may change every year, or as oft as she feel expedient. It is expedient that no Sister be put in any Office, or discharged of any Office, but in the Common Chapter, and each Sister shall have one Sister or more to help her in her Office after the discretion of the Abbess.

When, therefore, the Abbess will put any Sister in or out of Office, she must call a Chapter, then first tell the cause of the calling, and after call her by name whom she proposes to put in or out. And the Sister so-called shall rise and come before the Abbess, to whom the Abbess, if she purpose to put her in Office, shall say: "Sister N., I assign you this Ministration" (expressing it by name). And when the Sister heareth this, she shall lie down prostrate at the Abbess's feet. To whom the Abbess shall say: "What say ye?" She shall answer thus: "I ask grace and licence to speak." The Abbess shall say: "Arise!" Then the Sister shall rise and meekly say in such wise, under few words, kneeling: "Mother, you know right well mine indiscretion and inability to execute this difficult occupation. I beseech you therefore that you put not this upon me, but that in all wise I may be excused thereof, and some other Sister endowed with discretion and experience may be charged herewith." To whom the Abbess, if she be fully determined to have her in the said Office, shall say thus: "Notwithstanding your excuse that you make, or shall make herein, I will that you accept obediently this charge, and to your power and knowledge fulfil it effectually, wherefore presume you no more to excuse you herein, but go to your place."

Nevertheless, if there belong any keys to that Office, the Abbess shall deliver them to her openly before she go from her. And when she is bidden go to her place, she shall first incline and then go to her own place as she is wont, except it be a new Prioress as is expressed in Chapter XXX. of this book. The Sister that shall be discharged shall be called forth, as it is said before, and to her that hath well fulfilled her obedience and occupation the Abbess shall say in such wise: "Sister N., I thank you heartily that you

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have so diligently and so effectually fulfilled the ministration I committed to you to execute. But for certain causes moving me I will prove other in the same how diligent they will be and what ability they have, and therefore I discharge you thereof."

She hearing this, shall fall down prostrate at the Abbess's feet offering herself to kiss them, which the Abbess shall in no wise permit, but rather put down her right hand that she may kiss that, and if she had any keys pertaining to her Office she shall then openly deliver them to the Abbess, which done she shall, by commandment of the Abbess, take her own place due to her regular profession, although she had been Prioress in office.

And when the Abbess has discharged the Sister of any Office that keys belong to, she shall not commonly enter into such an office without the presence and assistance both of her that is discharged, and of her that is newly charged therewith, that it may be truly and verily known in what state it is delivered and taken. And yet for the more certainty the Abbess shall take with her some other Sisters that have most experience in such occupation for to bear witness. If any Sister be discharged of her office for open negligence, the Abbess shall say to her in such wise :

"Sister N., I put you into such an occupation of great trust, and you have been negligent therein. I discharge you thereof, proposing by God's Grace to provide to the Convent a better."

She hearing this, shall fall down prostrate at the Abbess's feet and when she is commanded to rise, shall openly and meekly kneeling acknowledge her negligences, and forthwith seek mercy and forgiveness of the Abbess and of all the Sisters, then to be punished as the trespass asketh.

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CHAPTER XII.

HOW OFFICERS OUGHT TO BE DISPOSED IN EVERY OFFICE.

None shall be appointed to any Office, occupation, or charge but such as the Abbess can surely trust in ; that they can, may, and will do and keep the charge that is laid on them. They ought to be of good name amongst their Sisters, and of laudable life and conversation, sweet and gentle in words, soft and prudent in answers, patient in labours, serious and honest in manners, not impatient, not troublesome, not light and vain in words, nor over-great speakers, but sober, demure, and cheerful to speak to, discreet, peaceable, wise, circumspect, and well-advised in giving and taking of answers, knowing to whom, what, how much, and how to deliver or receive anything inward or outward, and of whom.

In distribution of necessaries to the Sisters they shall not serve one all of the best, another all of the worst, nor for any favour give one much, another little, but deliver to each after their need without grudging and acceptance of persons, considering and pondering more the infirmity and need than the favour of any person, so yet that the eldest of each degree be ever served of the best.

When they have not ready at hand that is asked, they ought to excuse them goodly and honestly, promising to provide it as soon as they may.

They that need anything ought to ask it with mannerly reverence, praying to have what is needful to them ; and although they have not forthwith what they ask, or if be denied them, yet they ought not to take this grievously, but suffer patiently, for St. Austin saith "It is better to need somewhat than to have more than needeth," and St. Paul had great joy to be vexed with hunger, thirst, cold, and nakedness.

Unreasonable or ill-askers, or, if they ask anything not to be asked, the Officers shall not make them sorry, but they may answer thus to them courteously: "Sister, if I should take you what you ask, I know I should offend in the deliverance thereof, and you in the receiving ; nevertheless, let the Abbess say, and you shall have with a goodwill what ye desire."

And so by such demeanour and sufferance each person shall be in peace, and each Officer keep her Office without great offence.

About the sick, also, they ought ever to attend with diligence, and see that the goods of the Monastery be not spent in waste nor devoured and lost, whereby alms to the poor and needy might be withdrawn or abated through their negligence, knowing there is not the least thread in the cloth, nor crumb in the loaf, nor farthing in

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the till, nor drop in the vessel, but that shall accuse the users at the day of doom if they be misspent. Wherefore they ought not to receive or spend anything outward or inward unprofitably without special or general licence, assignment, commandment, or sufferance of the Abbess and expressly made, having a care that when they be called to reckoning they faithfully relate how it is spent, and therefore it is needful for them that they keep their bills indented lest anything go out of mind.

Furthermore, they ought to have great wariness that they never speak alone, otherwise than the Rule suffereth, and this under peril of their souls. Nevertheless, when they may get no Sister to be present with them, and the matter may not be delayed without hurt to the Monastery, then in such cases the Abbess may license them to speak, as the matter requireth, in soft and few words alone, in those things only that concern the weal and honesty of the place. But none shall enquire of tidings how the world goeth, or how he or she fareth, or any such thing concerning in any wise their own solace and comfort, without one hearer at least, after the form of the Rule.

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CHAPTER XIII.

OF PLACES WHERE SILENCE IS TO BE STRICTLY KEPT.

In the Church, Choir, Refectory, Cloister, Dormitory, silence is ever to be kept. Nevertheless, when case cometh of very need, the Abbess may dispense with that silence in any of the said places, and that as far as the matter requireth and no more. Also, silence is to be kept in the Library whilst any Sister is there alone in recording of her reading; also in the washing-house in time of washing, except in a quiet voice for things necessary to be spoken, or for to be asked or had. Also in the Chapter, after beginning of the second peal to Collation, but yet if it be also in a still voice for anything necessary, honest, and profitable, and in all places nigh to the Church. And therefore, when anything is to be asked, spoken, notified, or charged in time or place of strict silence, this shall be done by signs, and not words, unless it may not be expressed by any usual sign. If it may not be expressed nor the place changed where it falleth, then it may be expressed in a still voice and few words, as is said before. And silence is to be kept in the Belfry at the time of ringing.

OF STILLNESS.

Furthermore, as there shall be a strict reckoning of any idle word, much speech is to be fled of all, namely, after meals, for then lightly the tongue findeth matters to speak and trespass. And as silence duly kept is a singular worship to God, it is right not only that grievous speech be kept away, but also that the tongue be restrained with the bridle of stillness, though the speeches be good, for they that can govern the tongue best be most wise, wherefore the speech of all shall be meek and low, soft and demure, sweet and true, ever of spiritual things, and of any necessities after the Rule, delighting ever rather to hear and be still than to speak, and not use to answer but to things asked, and when they come to speak together, they shall speak seriously and religiously that is to be spoken, not multiplying unprofitable words, nothing to the purpose, nor cry out with loud voice, but softly, soberly, and with quiet shortness, shall they say that is to be said, soon take their leave, and go their way. When the Sisters in convenient times and places speak together they shall have their hands within their cowl sleeves, or else honestly and religiously joined together, hold them before them. None of highness shall *thou* another in speaking, but each shall speak reverently to other, the younger to the elder. None in common speech shall say "This is *mine*," but "This is *ours*," save each ought to say of her carnal friends: "This is *my father*," or "*My mother*," or "*My cousin*," and of her sin, "This is *my sin*." When they speak to outward persons

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at the Grates they shall behave them as it is said of speaking inward to Sisters, but with more wariness, not mixing the speech with secular fables and frivolities, nor yet gladly hear such things, but if any fruitless thing be spoken they shall be still, dissimulating as if they heard it not, and either they shall speak of things more profitable, or else soon bid them farewell and go from them.

If they hear any scurrility, or any other worldly vanity, they must have great wariness, that they tell not this to other Sisters, but show further their disdain and loth to hear such things, showing themselves in all words, gestures, and manners that they be the very spouses of Christ, thinking that they be ever in His gracious presence, and have dread to offend his benignity that is first over all.

OF SIGNS USED INSTEAD OF SPEECH.

Also they shall have wariness in allwise that they speak not with their fingers when they show anything, that is that they exercise no inordinate sign of unstableness, for howbeit that signs be necessarily ordained for to exclude occasion of idle, vain, superfluous, and unprofitable speech, yet it is never lawful to use them without reason and profitable need, for ofttime more hurteth an evil sign than an evil word and more offence it may be to God. The Great Feasts that the Sisters may speak to seculars be all those feasts of saints ordained by the Church to be kept as High as the Sunday.

OF OPENING OF THE WINDOW AND SIGHT OF SECULARS.

If any Sister's friends desire to see her, the Abbess shall not lightly grant this, but seldom in the year, but if the same Sister have a will to be seen of her dear and honest friends. When any Sister shall be seen, the Abbess shall warn them that they behave them godly and religiously in countenance, in speech and in all their actions.

OF BODILY BEHAVIOUR.

Moreover for by the outward bodily meaning is oft known the inward disposition of the soul, they ought to moderate all the bodily behaviour in such wise that they never exceed the bonds of honesty, neither in laughing, standing, sitting, nor going, for, as saith the wise man, the arrayment of the body, dissolute laughing, and the entry of a person show what he is. And Solomon saith: "The Apostate goeth frowning with the mouth, trampleth and fiddleth with the feet, winketh with the eye, and speaketh with his fingers."

OF LAUGHTER.

None therefore shall presume to laugh over much or out of measure dissolutely, but when the Abbess or any of the older

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Sisters begin to laugh upon any Sister or Sisters by way of recreation, courtesy, will, and very love and charity, that they smile or laugh again soberly.

OF STANDING.

Whenever they stand, namely, in Divine Service in Church, they shall not stand upon one foot alone, holding up the other, nor one over another, nor yet hold their chins or cheeks in their hands, leaning notably with their backs or arms, or cast out their arms or hands, nor shrug with their shoulders, but they shall stand upright, holding their hands before them honestly within their mantles or cowl sleeves, unless need compelleth them to do otherwise.

OF SITTING.

Also wheresoever they sit they shall sit upright, gathering the extremities of their mantles and cowls about them that they fly not abroad, holding their hands within their cowl sleeves in places of silence, and not stretch out their legs too far, nor lay one knee over the other, but cover their feet honestly under their clothes, and not sit fiddling with them. And when they sit between two Sisters they shall sit so ordinately and so directly, that neither they have their faces to that one, nor their backs turned any deal to that other, nor yet cast lightly their heads about, nor lean to one side more than to another.

OF GOING AND SIGHT KEEPING.

In the going also, all must behave them so regulary and honestly that they go no more on the right side than on the left—not too fast, nor too slow, without running and hard going, without jolting and moving of the shoulders, without swinging of the arms or of the hands, nor stretching out the neck, nor looking about slyly, nor hold too upright the head, but somewhat down to the earth, and go forth simply, showing over all the signs of meekness, remembering the meek publican that durst not lift up his eyes to heaven but kept his sight down, and, smiting his heart, said inwardly, “Deus propitius esto mihi peccatori.”

And so in all the movings after the Rule of St. Austin they shall be bound to show their godly conversation effectually.

Moreover, none shall go from one Monastery to another, though it be of the same Order, but if there be other Monasteries of this same Order built in the Realm of England, then they may go to any of the Monasteries after the form expressed in the Bull of Pope Martin V. and not else. Nevertheless, if the Monastery, as God forbid, fall on fire, or be assaulted by enemies suddenly, or by very certainty such peril is to fall, then they may avoid the Monastery if need be, for a while, and return when such peril is past.

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CHAPTER XIV.

OF DIVINE SERVICE AND OBSERVANCES THEREIN.

Since every religion is therefore ordained principally that Divine Service should be duly continued in Holy Church, therefore it is according that it may be performed in such wise, that not only the doers thereof, but also the hearers, be edified thereby. Wherefore their song shall be serious, sober, and simple, with all meekness and devotion, but organs shall they never have. The psalmody shall be distinct and open, and all things measured and moderated after discretion.

In the Choir all shall be as angels, inclining together, rising together, kneeling together, standing, turning, and sitting together—all after one form, going and coming together.

In opening, also, and shutting of books, turning of leaves, lifting up and putting down of stalls, saying their beads or devotions, and in all other such things doing, they shall have wariness of making any great sound or noise by whispering, sighing, sobbing, or rattling of beads, whereby any other might be unrested, and reasonably take occasion to demean them of hypocrisy or want of seriousness. Their sight, also silence, and signs they shall keep most of all there, and not go out till the Service be ended, without reasonable cause, and by licence and command of her that is President there for the time.

To Divine Service none shall come without their whole habit honestly upon her, as it is expressed before in the Second Chapter, her mantle buttoned with a button of wood, after the Rule, nor yet to speech of Seculars without or within.

OF INCLINATIONS.

As oft as they enter the Choir they shall devoutly incline in the place assigned, not beckoning with the head and lightly start forth, but seriously, with due reverence and worship, gathering together the sides of their mantles before them with both hands, that they fly not abroad, having the right hand in cross-wise over the left, not bowing their backs round like a bent bow, but bring their shoulders even and straight and plain out, inclining so low that the hands without violent stretching out may touch both knees, which is to be observed whenever they incline in their mantles, so that if two be together they shall incline together, and turn face to face, as oft as they turn backward after the inclination, and so shall they incline without mantles, save that they shall keep their hands cross-wise in their cowl sleeves.

And these be the times and places that they shall incline in, and

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the things whereto they shall incline—that is to say, in the Church, Chapter, and Refectory—as oft as they come in or out, before and after Conventual acts, and in the Choir as oft as they come in and go out of the stalls; and also they shall incline in the midst when they go from one side to another; they shall genuflect to the High Altar, because of the Sacrament being there, and incline profoundly to the Lady Altar, and to the Crucifix, and to the Image of Our Lady, as often as they pass by—namely, in the Church; and also at the names of Jesus and Mary as oft as they hear them pronounced anywhere, with all devotion and reverence, sit they, stand they, or whichever way they turn.

Also when they have made the inclination in the Choir to the East, they shall turn then and incline to the Abbess, both going in and out of the Choir. Also when any Sister goeth before another in the Choir or in any other straight place, she shall bow the head, and lift up the hand, in manner of asking leave to go by her, to which the other shall bow the head again in token of granting leave.

Also each Sister shall do reverence to the other as often as they meet together, take and receive anything, or render any service, by somewhat bowing down with their head and body, the younger, *i.e.*, to the elder.

OF LATE COMERS TO CHOIR.

And for Divine Service is to be preferred before all other things, therefore when they hear the ringing thereto, they shall come to Church betimes, that they may make ready their hearts to God before beginning, that they more duly praise Him.

If any come after *Deus in adiutorium* is begun, she shall incline and go to her place. If *Gloria patri* be begun she shall incline till *Sicut erat*, and then go to her stall without sign of the President. If any come when the hymn is begun or after, she shall incline till the President make a sign to rise, and then go to her stall or to another place whereby no other Sister be hindered of her office, which also is to be observed if Mass be begun, so that all such must proclaim and tell the cause of the late coming in due time and place.

Such as oft come late without reasonable cause shall be more sharply corrected. Nevertheless, come any never so late, if there is little help in the Choir, they shall incline and quickly go to their place though the President make no sign, helping forth as they may, and after that service or lesson they shall say to the place where they begun and proclaim and confess their late coming at the first opportunity.

So yet that after the third Psalm is ended, of any of the small Hours, none shall enter into the stalls save in time of great need.

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OF FAILERS IN DIVINE SERVICE.

If any fail in reading or singing in the Choir, she shall, as oft as it is perceived of others, kneel down towards the Altar whilst they sing on the other side, namely, in the Psalms, touch the ground with her hand, knock herself on the breast, rise and incline also to the Altar, and then sing forth as she did before, having always a care that the kneeling down for one fault be not the cause of more, which faults also she must proclaim when the time cometh, and take correction for them, namely, if the fault be so great that all the Choir is distracted thereby. But none shall kneel down at the Lectern till the Lesson or Verse be ended, nor when going in any Procession. "She that will not kneel down when she faileth," Saint Benedict saith, "she is too proud, for she will not humble herself in the presence of others, wherefore she is to be chastised the more sharply in Chapter."

Nevertheless, the aged and very feeble shall do in their observance as the Abbess assigneth them, the causes having been first made known openly in the Chapter, that no occasion of evil be ministered to others.

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CHAPTER XV.

OF OBSERVANCE AT MATINS AND LAUDS.

The tapers lit, the Abbess, or Prioress in her absence, or else the Hebdomadary in absence of both, shall strike her right hand upon the desk or book not over loud, but in such manner as all the Choir may hear it. At the which sign all the Choir shall kneel down, and secretly say one *Pater, Ave,* and *Credo* each by themselves alone. And when she maketh another sign with her hand as she did before, all must rise and stand turned to the East, inclining and making the sign of the Cross of Jesus on their foreheads and breasts, praying Him inwardly that their service may be acceptable to Him and His Blessed Mother.

And this is to be observed before every Hour, except the saying of the *Credo*, which is not said but before Matins and Prime.

The Hebdomadary shall begin *Dignare me*, turning to the East with all the Choir answering to the same, to *Domine labia,* and *Deus in adjutorium.* At *Gloria Patri* all shall incline face to face as oft as it is had, except in Processions, rising at *Sicut erat*, and then stand Choir to Choir till *Alleluia.* Save when they sing *Laus tibi Domine*, they shall incline to the end thereof, Choir to Choir.

From the beginning of the Invitatory to *Gloria Patri* after *Venite* they shall stand turned to the East, and then they shall turn Choir to Choir unto the last verse of the Hymn, at which they incline face to face, then stand up, and turn to the East at *Amen*, which is to be observed at the last verse of every Hymn throughout the year.

The second and third Antiphons at Matins shall be begun by them that be tabled unto this, but the first Antiphon and all other Antiphons at Lauds, Prime, Hours, Vespers, and Complin shall be begun by the Hebdomadary.

She that beginneth any Antiphon shall turn to the East and incline the same way when she hath done, but the Choir shall stand face to face, save when the Hebdomadary beginneth her Antiphon, all shall turn to the East as she doth. At the beginning of every Psalm the Choir shall stand face to face, except the Beginners on High Double Feasts.

In the Psalmody the Choir shall sit one Psalm and stand another, beginning ever with the first Psalm, so that the first Psalm intoned to the middle of the first verse they shall sit down, rising again at *Gloria Patri*, and inclining as is said before, and standing Choir to Choir whilst they sing the Antiphon after the Psalms.

About the middle of the third Antiphon the Sisters that shall sing the Versicle shall go out of their stalls religiously, turning to the

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East with all the Choir whilst they sing it at the Desk, inclining both before and after, which also is to be observed of all Sisters as oft as they sing or read anything at the Desk or Lectern.

The answer of the Versicle ended, all the Choir shall incline to the East like as they stand in the answer of the Versicle, and then they shall turn Choir to Choir and say *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria* inclining. Which done, the Hebdomadary shall stand upright with all the Choir, and, turning all to the East, she shall begin *Et ne nos* with *Precibus*. If the Abbess be present, all must conform them to her. They that shall read the Lessons at the Lectern shall, after *Jube Domine*, incline to the East till the Benedictions be ended. And the Choir answering *Amen*, before the first Lesson, they must sit down without any tarrying before the Lesson begins, that the reader may so much the better be heard by all, and they must sit still till *Gloria Patri* of the last Response. Nevertheless the Sisters that shall sing the Verses of the Responses at the Lectern shall go out of their stalls religiously about the middle of every Response, and for they may not incline with the Choir the while they sing *Gloria Patri* of the third Response, they shall incline before, while the Choir singeth the repeat, which is to be observed in all other Responses that be sung with *Gloria Patri* and in all other things when the singers may not conveniently incline with the Choir.

At the beginning of *Te Deum* all the Choir shall stand to the East with the Hebdomadary that beginneth it, and at the *Te Æternum Patrem* they shall stand Choir to Choir unto the last end of the Psalm, save at *Sanctus* and *non horruisti*, all shall incline face to face, and at the verse, *Te ergo quæsumus*, they shall kneel, and at *In æternum*, they shall turn to the East and so stand till *Gloria Patri* after *Deus in adjutorium* at Lauds.

When *Te Deum* is not had they shall instead thereof sing this Psalm, *Miserere mei Deus*, kneeling Choir to Choir, as it is specified in the Ordinal. At Lauds all things shall follow the observances expressed at Evensong in Chapter XVIII. of thisbook. Save in the last end of the *Benedicite* they shall incline Choir to Choir while they sing this verse, *Benedicamus Patrem*, rising up again at *laudémus et superexaltémus eum in sæcula*. The same is to be observed for the Verse *Benedictus es Dómine*.

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CHAPTER XVI.

OF PRIME, MASS AND TERCE.

The Sisters shall begin their Prime, keeping the observances as they did in like things at Matins, so that the Executor of the service shall begin the Antiphon at Prime and the other Hours, and they that sing the Versicles of the same day shall sing the Responses of the said Hours at the Lectern, turning to the East with the Choir.

After Prime shall follow Mass (of Our Lady), at the beginning whereof all shall stand Choir to Choir. (Save at these words, *Salve Sancta parens*, all shall kneel down and devoutly incline at both times doing worship and reverence to the Mother of God, rising up again at *Enixa Puerpera*.) The two Beginners that begin Mass or anything else in the middle of the Choir, shall at each inclination incline to the East, and sit to the East, whichever way the Choir stand, sit or incline, keeping their inclination at *Gloria Patri*, as is said before at Matins.

Also the Choir shall stand Choir to Choir whilst they sing the *Kyrie*, at the beginning of *Gloria in Excelsis* they shall turn to the East, and again Choir to Choir at *Et in terra*, so inclining at *Adoramus te*, and *Suscipe deprecationem nostram*, save while they sing *Amen*, and as oft as they sing *Et cum spiritu tuo*, or answer the Priest or Deacon of any other thing in the Mass, they shall turn to the East. At the first Collects they shall incline Choir to Choir, standing up again to the East at *Qui tecum vivit*, but in the Commemorations they shall kneel down, standing up at *Qui tecum*, as is said before.

From the beginning of the Epistle till the Sequence be ended they shall sit in their stalls, save the Sisters, who shall sing the Verses of the *Graduali* and *Alleluia*, these shall sing them standing at the Lectern. Also from Septuagesima to Easter the Tract *Gaude Maria* shall be sung at the Lectern. And this Prose, *Inviolata*, in the Choir side by side sitting.

But at these words, *O Maria, O benigna, O Maria*, all must kneel down, sitting up again at *Que sola*. The Sequence ended, they shall turn to the Altar, so inclining at *Gloria tibi Domine*, when the Priest inclineth, making the Sign of the Cross on their foreheads, and upon their breasts as the manner is.

When *Credo* is begun, they shall turn again Choir to Choir, and kneeling down at the words *Et incarnatus*, and rising up again at *Resurrexit*. The Offertory they shall sing Choir to Choir standing, and kneel down after, leaning to their desks, but from *Per omnia* unto *Sanctus* they shall stand to the East, so inclining at these words, *Gratias agamus*. From the end of the Preface unto *Benedictus* they shall stand Choir to Choir, inclining so at the first *Sanctus*, whereof

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the Beginners shall incline before they begin it. And the first *Hosanna* ended, they shall kneel down till *Pater Noster*, beginning *Benedictus* evermore at the Elevation of the Sacrament. At beginning of the *Pater Noster* they shall rise and incline Choir to Choir, but they shall sing *Sed libera nos a malo*, standing to the East. Also they shall sing the three *Agnus*, Choir to Choir, turning to the East again at the end of the third, and face to face whilst they sing the Communion. At the last Collects they shall keep the same observances they did at the first, standing to the East at *Qui tecum* as is said before, but after *Deo gratias* they shall kneel down again till the Blessing of the Mass be given, and St. John's Gospel ended, they shall say three *Paters* and *Aves* for peace, turned towards the East. After the Gospel is ended they shall forthwith begin the Hour of Terce, and proceed with due observance expressed at Prime. The Hours of Sext and None shall be performed in like manner, and without long tarrying, after that, they shall go to dinner.

OF COMMUNION.

When any shall be communicated they shall come together religiously, and at the assignment of the Priest, say the *Confiteor* together, or one Sister appointed, for as many as shall be communicated at the time, be it in or after the Mass, and Absolution given, they shall rise and kneel at the Communion window together, as many as religiously may, inclining before and after Communion.

The Hour of Terce ended they shall make the inclinations, and go in procession-wise to the Grave, two and two together, the youngest before.

And the Abbess, or President in her absence, standing at the Grave, and the eldest Sister next unto her on each side, she shall with her two fingers take out a little earth, beginning the Psalm *De Profundis* her side saying with her, and the other side answering, face to face, inclining at *Gloria Patri*, and while the Abbess saith the Collect *Domine Sancte Pater*.

After this the Abbess says *Benedicite*, the Convent shall answer *Dominus*, and then the Chantress shall read the *Obits*, if there be any in the *Martiloge* in the morn, which read, the Abbess shall say *Anima ejus*, or *animæ eorum*, or *earum et animæ omnium fidelium defunctorum per misericordiam, Jesu Christi in pace requiescant*. Then the Convent shall answer *Amen*, and then silence shall be loosed, and the Sisters may take their veynes, and proclaim their faults, or else by license of the Abbess or President go to take their breakfast.

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CHAPTER XVII.

OF BODILY DISCIPLINE.

Every Friday in the year, except Christmas Eve, and from thence to the Octave of the Purification of Our Lady, and from Easter till the Octave of Corpus Christi, and every Wednesday of Lent, also after the passage of any Sister or Brother, and on All Souls' Day, and at other times accustomed or assigned by the Abbess, the dormitory bell shall be tolled and the Sisters shall take a bodily discipline in due time and place. And in time of discipline the Hebdomadary or another Sister shall say the following *preces*, the Convent answering: Psalm *Miserere mei Deus*, *Deus Misereatur*, and *De Profundis*. So that each Psalm be ended with *Gloria Patri* and *Ave Maria*, and after the last they shall say this Antiphon, *Ne reminiscaris*, with *Kyrie*, *Pater*, *Ave*, *Et ne nos*, and the rest as noted in the Supplement (P. 837).

If any Sister for any reasonable cause may not take her discipline she shall say the said *preces* alone. But when the Abbess in time of great cold, or for other reasonable cause, will pardon the Sisters of their disciplines, yet they shall say the same *preces* under the short veynes together.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

OF OBSERVANCE AT EVENSONG.

Before Evensong the Sisters shall say the *Pater* and *Ave* as they did at Matins, but without a *Credo*.

And all standing up Choir to Choir, the right side shall first incline profoundly to the other, saying *Ave Maria* and *Indulgete*. And in the meantime the left side standing upright shall give devout audience to the right side, and so must the right side do to the left. This done they shall begin the Evensong as the Ordinal sheweth, turning to the East at the end of the Antiphon after the Psalms.

And the Chapter ended with *Deo gratias*, they shall turn Choir to Choir, so standing while they sing the Response, when there is any, but while the Verse is in singing they shall sit, keeping the observance at *Gloria Patri* at the Hymn and at the Versicles as it is expressed at Matins.

At *Magnificat* they shall turn Choir to Choir, standing upright, little or nothing leaning with their backs or arms to the stalls, and so ought they to do at *Nunc Dimittis*, *Te Deum*, and *Benedictus*.

From the end of the Antiphons, after the said Psalms, unto the end of Evensong and Complin, Matins and Lauds, they shall stand to the East, except it be in the Collects, for then they shall incline Choir to Choir, standing to the East again at *Qui tecum vivit*, which is to be observed in all orisons said in the Choir through the year with note.

Nevertheless, she that executeth the Service shall stand still in her stall to the East, save at beginning of this Anthem *Ave Maria*, and from thence unto the last end of every Hour of the year, all must reverently and devoutly kneel down, inclining also at the name *Maria*.

Also at Evensong, Matins, and after every Hour, the Abbess, or the Hebdomadary, in her absence, shall say this little prayer:—

Animæ fundatorum nostrorum et animæ famulorum famularumque tuarum, et omnium fidelium defunctorum, per misericordiam Jesu Christi in pace requiescant. The Convent shall answer *Amen* without note.

And after Evensong the Prioress, or another Searcher, in absence of the Abbess, after the space of this Psalm, *Deus misereatur nostri*, shall strike with her hand as she did before Evensong, and then all shall rise and incline religiously before the Desk towards the Altar and go their ways, yet so that none go to any other place than evenforth down to the Refectory, without special leave asked and had of the President.

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OF OBSERVANCE AT COLLATION AND COMPLIN.

When they shall hear the second peal to the Collation they shall come together and sit in order in the Chapter, keeping their silence, and when the President at last end of the peal goeth to her place all must stand up, but not incline, save only to the Abbess, and when she hath inclined to the Majesty and taken her seat, the Convent also, at her assignment, shall sit down again.

And then if there be any Sister or Brother of the Chapter late passed to God, the President shall announce it to the Convent, which anon, standing turned to the Majesty side for side shall say *De Profundis* for the soul, with the Suffrages and due regular observance ordained therefore, and then sit down again.

And all things treated then to be treated, that is to say, things that may not be congruously deferred to another time—the Reader shall, at the bidding of the President, say *Jube Domine* after the form expressed in the first Chapter; the President shall answer, *Noctem quietam et vitam beatam tribuat nobis omnipotens Pater, pius et misericors Dominus.* The Convent shall answer *Amen*, and then the Reader shall read whatever the Abbess assigneth, and *Deo gratias* ended, the Convent shall rise and turn to the Majesty, the President saying, with a low inclination, *Adjutorium nostrum*, and the Convent in like wise answering with note, *Qui fecit cælum et terram.*

And after this they shall go to the Choir procession-wise—the youngest first—and they shall keep the same observance at Complin as be expressed for like things at Matins and the Hours, save after the last *Deo gratias* the Hebdomadary shall say this Versicle, *Ave Maria*, inclining, so that from the beginning of the Antiphon of Our Lady to the end of the Service all shall kneel, except those Sisters that shall sing the Versicle, while they sing it, and those that be tabled to sing the Verses of *Salve Regina*, or *Regina Cæli*, which shall be sung standing at the Desk.

And when the last Collect is ended all shall put down their veils, and so keep them till morning.

OF VERSES AT COMPLIN IN LENT.

In Lent, after *Nunc Dimittis*, this Antiphon, *O mitissime*, shall be sung with Verses, the Choir kneeling at these words, *O benigne Creator* and *O pie Redemptor*, but at *O invictissime Triumphator* all shall stand up again, yet so that the Sisters shall sing the Verses standing at the Lectern while they sing them.

OF HOLY WATER AFTER COMPLIN.

All Service ended, they shall again return to the stalls, and shall

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say, each of them kneeling, fifteen *Aves* softly, not abiding the *Ave* Bell. But the President only may lean to the Form or Desk, and kneel, and when she maketh a sign with her hand, they shall rise and go processionally to take Holy Water, the eldest going before, and as they take it, two and two together—the eldest first—they shall incline to the President that giveth it, and after this they shall go to the Dormitory.

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CHAPTER XIX.

OF THE MANNER OF DOING DIVINE SERVICE, ETC.

In all principal and High Feasts the stall of the Abbess is to be arranged more festively with hangings than at other times, and the Chantress, with one of her assistants, in all such Feasts shall sit in the middle of the Choir all Service time, doing the Office of Rectrice, beginning all things toward the East, save at *Indulgete*, when they shall conform them to the Choir. All Chapters at Evensong, Complin, Matins, Prime, and Hours shall ever be said in a low, sober voice.

Also in all High Feasts the Chantress shall assign one of the eldest Sisters to read the first Lesson at Matins, the Prioress the second, the Abbess the third, and four of the eldest Sisters best disposed, to sing the Verse of the Response at the first Evensong, and the third Verse at Matins, and *Alleluia* at Mass, and *Benedicite* at Evensong on Feasts of Our Lady.

In all other Double Feasts and days she shall assign other Sisters to do the said things, and all others according to the Feast or day, so that on Sundays and Feasts of nine Lessons she shall assign another Sister to sing *Venite* with the Sisters tabled thereto, and so she shall do for the third Response at Matins and *Alleluia* at Mass, but in Double Feasts four at least shall sing *Venite*.

OF MAKING THE TABLES.

Wherefore, that the more certainty be had in Our Lord's Service in Church, Chapter, and Refectory, the Chantress shall every Friday make a Table, and set it in such place of the Choir that all the Sisters may look upon it and see what they have to do.

Having care that no Sister be tabled to anything but such as have ability to keep it in every reading and singing, week by week, as they are in order of Profession. And yet, for the more secureness, she shall ask of those Sisters whom she is proposed to table whether they can keep the weeks or no, so that if they be not able to keep their times she may change with some other Sisters, each keeping for the other, as the course cometh about, what side soever they be of.

But none shall be passed over without reasonable cause known to the Convent and allowed by the Abbess.

OF PRAYER INSTEAD OF CENSING.

Also, forasmuch as the Sisters use no censuring, it is fitting that, instead of incense, they use devout prayer, saying with the Prophet *Dirigatur, Domine, ad te oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo*. And therefore Saint Benedict saith in his Rule "that on Sundays,

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namely, and Holy Days, all the Convent should be occupied in devout prayers and holy readings. Wherefore, if any be found misoccupied, as with idleness or vain tales, such a one is unprofitable, not only to herself, but also she hindreth others," and therefore he commandeth "that if any such be found in the congregation they shall, after certain admonitions to leave off, and will not to amend, be sharply corrected, openly in the Chapter." By this word correction, after Saint Benedict's Rule, is understood evermore a discipline, such also, moreover, as may be at the service of the day, namely, the Holy Days, without prejudice of this our Service.

It is according that they stand up at *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis*, *Te Deum*, *Benedictus*, *Gospels*, and such other, conforming themselves as much as they may to the common ordinances of Holy Church.

When the Convent is in any conventual act, none shall presume of her own account to go out to see any of the ceremonies at any of the Altars, but they shall keep their wonted observance, or else kneel down if it be in the Choir, and see Our Lord in their souls, looking upon their books, that default be not made in the reading or singing, for God loveth more to be worshipped and seen with the eyes of the soul than with the eyes of the body, saying with Our Lord:—" *Veri adoratores adorabunt Deum in spiritu et veritate.*"

OF THE WEEKLY SUFFRAGES AMONG THE SISTERS.

Every Sunday the Sisters shall say Matins and Hours of the Holy Ghost. Every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday *Dirge*, with three Lessons, and every Thursday these three Psalms, *Confitebor tibi Domine*, *Diligam te, Domine*, and *Deus Deus, meus, respice.*

Also each Friday, commonly after the Matins, they shall say the Seven Psalms and the Litany of the Saints for their sins and others, and after that take a discipline, if it be a discipline day, from which observance none shall absent herself without license. Wherefore they that be not at Matins shall dispose them to come betimes thereto, that they may go in Procession with the Sisters about the Cloisters, the Cross going before, without torches or Holy Water.

And when all be come again into the stalls, the Cross-bearer shall put the Cross in the appointed place, and the Hebdomadary shall read the Litany in a place assigned to her by the Abbess, where she may be heard of all the Choir.

And when there is any Sister or Brother passed, she shall sing this Collect, *Deus cui proprium*, or *Quæsumus Domine* before *Fidelium*. Also each Saturday they shall say these three Psalms, *Attendite, popule meus, Misericordias Domini*, and *Confitemini.*

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CHAPTER XX.

OF PROCESSIONS.

As for Processions, when the Sisters have any they shall keep this form. The Response or Antiphon, or *Salve feste dies* begun, the Cross shall go before or else Holy Water as on Rogation Days. And in all high and principal Feasts the Sacristan shall bear an Image of Our Lady after the Cross, and two torches shall be borne on each side a little before the Image.

After them shall follow the Sisters that sing not, after them the Choir, the youngest before, and the Abbess coming behind at the end of the Procession, all being in their whole regular Habit. And they must take heed that their pace be not too fast nor too slow, and that two and two ever go together as much as they may, and that there be ever a space of two or three feet between them that go before and them that follow after, that each may hear the other and so beware of discord. And as they pass out by the Abbess they shall incline to her, and when they come in again, they shall incline before the Desk, and again when they take their places in the stalls.

And these be the days that they shall have Processions: On the Feast of the Circumcision, Translation of Saint Bridget, and St. John Baptist, when these Feasts fall on Sunday. Also Palm Sunday, St. Mark's Days, Rogation Days, SS. Peter and Paul, St. Anne's Day, Michaelmas Day, all Feasts of Our Lady, and all principal or High Double Feasts.

OF THE HOLY WATER-BEARER.

The Holy Water-bearer shall go before, casting Holy Water on every side as she goeth, the Cross-bearer shall follow, and torch-bearers, with the tapers burning, and then the rest of the Convent.

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CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE ORDERING OF THE CHOIR.

In the entrance of the Choir on the right side of the West end shall be the Abbess's stall, and on the left side the Prioress's. Other Sisters shall stand, the eldest next the Abbess and the Prioress—half at one side and half at the other—as they be in order of Profession. Not all shall sit together, but so equally divided that each side be like in fulness of voice and singing. But at the Lady Mass, the Abbess, Prioress, and elder Sisters may stand at the East end, and the younger Sisters after them.

OF THE OFFICE OF THE ABBESS.

In all principal Feasts the Abbess shall execute the Service, singing the Verse and *Benedicite* at Evensong—the third Verse at Matins, and *Alleluia*, or last verse of the Tract at Our Lady's Mass. Also she shall read the third Lesson in all principal Feasts, and so she may on all other Feasts, whatever they be, and sing anything at Evensong, Matins, and Mass, when she feels herself disposed. Also she shall make all the terminations in Choir, give the third Blessing at Matins, when she readeth not the Lesson, and all other Blessings in Choir, Chapter, and Refectory, say *Anima regis* and *Domine Sancte Pater*, and give Holy Water after Complin.

Also it lieth in her charge to see that all regular observances be duly kept in the Choir, and in all other places, conforming herself to the same in all points, and to admit secular women to religion (as it is said in the XXXVI. Chapter), or unto Sisters and Brothers of the Chapter, such as devoutly ask it of her, after the form expressed in the VII. Chapter, with many other things here and there in this book set out. If she be absent from Choir, or indisposed to sing, the Prioress or Hebdomadary shall fulfil in her stead, as it is noted.

OF THE OFFICE OF CHANTRESS.

The Chantress and Sub-Chantress ought to be competent and perfect in reading and singing, having experience of the Ordinal, and making of the table for the Choir, with ability of voice, of the which one whom the Abbess assigneth shall be chief Chantress, to whose charge principally it belongeth to have careful attendance about Divine Service, that all things be done in good order, and that nothing be omitted through her negligence or of any other to her power.

Also to set the song even and measurable, neither too high nor too low, neither too fast nor too slow, but soberly and devoutly, according to the solemnity of the Feast or day, and according to the length of the Services of the Sisters, and according to the ability of

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their voices, not to sing one day so high that they can do no more, or too long and low that they weary and bring sleep both to themselves and their hearers—this wanteth discretion and doctrine of Our Lord, which teacheth in this Holy Rule that all things should be done reasonably.

Therefore, it is fitting that she have always two or three, or at least one note, before all others, in setting of everything, that they may the better understand what height and measure they shall keep. She must also have great wariness that no defaults be made in Divine Service, so that when any Sister in singing or reading happens to make any fault notably perceived of others, and doth not amend it forthwith, she shall sing, and easily amend the fault. But, if she perceive that it may not be amended without great disturbance or delay of the Choir, then it is better to proceed, and let each Sister privately by herself amend the fault, lest the hearers be rather disedified than edified, and the Chantress when she seeth her time shall proclaim such fault for the while dissimulated. Also it is her part to see that the Choir be even on both sides in number, voice and skill, by calling over from one side to another as need may be, and this in most convenient time she may, that the Choir be not distracted thereby, and to rule the Processions, etc. Also to intone softly to the Abbess all the Antiphons that she is to begin on Double Feasts and others, and to remind her when she shall read any Lesson or sing any Verse if need be, or do anything in any conventual act. Also to write, or make to be written, all the names of Sisters that ask religion, expressing the day with the year of Our Lord when they be admitted to the year of proof, and to order the scrolls of the renouncing and of the obedience making, if she has charge of them, and also to set in the names of Sisters and Brothers Professed in the Register of the Chapter, and in the Martyrology when they die, with the day and year of Our Lord, and yearly to read their Obits after *De Profundis* at the Hour of Terce, as their years come about, and to warn the Sisters of dirges, burials, and the thirty days and anniversaries and of all other things that may fall, and to see that the Rules, Additions, Injunctions, and all other things be duly read, so that nothing of any statute or custom be passed over concerning Divine Service. Also it is her charge to have all the books in keeping that belong to Divine Service, Chapter and Refectory, and to see that they be corrected and made of one accord; and also to correct the readers, so that without her knowledge nothing be corrected in any of the said books, nor changed in the Ordinal without the consent of the Abbess.

Also to have the first proclamation in the Chapter of all faults

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made openly anywhere in Divine Service; and, therefore, she oughteth to be aware that she do nothing troublesomely or commandingly, and she be not importune in her assignments, nor set anything higher or lower, longer or shorter, except it be necessary, doing all things quietly, peaceably, religiously, and charitably, with good words or signs, and a manner of mild beseeching, that the Sisters have a joy to do anything for her. For oft times, stately and unreligious bearing causeth murmur and grudging to others, and excludeth grace from both parties. None therefore shall presumptuously take any note before her, but to her setting, higher or lower, longer or shorter, tabling and assignments, all are ready to obey as in Divine Service. Such as do the contrary to the disturbance and hindering of God's Service, shall be corrected as they that do more grievous faults.

OF THE SUB-CHANTRESSES,

The Office of the Chief Sub-Chantress is to assist the Chantress in the middle of the Choir on High Feasts, and to fulfil her Office in all places as oft as she is absent, or hath impediment, and also to set the table expressed in Chapter XIX.

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CHAPTER XXII.

OF THE ALTERNATION OF THE CHOIR AND HEBDOMADARIES.

Every other week the Choir shall vary, so that it be on the Abbess's side one week, and on the Prioress's side another week, beginning always on Saturday at Evensong. Nevertheless, in all principal Feasts it shall be on the right side as for that day, so that if the Hebdomadary be then of the other side, she shall come over in the absence of the Abbess and fulfil her Office on the Abbess's side on that day only, and so shall she do also the Abbess being present and not disposed to sing, unless the Abbess ordain otherwise.

OF THE HEBDOMADARY.

The Hebdomadary is bound to be one of the first in Choir, and to absent and withdraw herself from all things that week that might hinder her from fulfilling her Office. And when the Abbess executeth not the Service she shall begin the Invitatory, and give the third Blessing when the Abbess readeth the third Lesson, and also fulfil the Office of the Abbess on principal Feasts as aforesaid, except in such things as belong to the Prioress or Searchers, as it sheweth in diverse places of these Additions.

OF THE BEGINNERS.

The Rectrices or the two Beginners of Mass, or of any other thing by the week, shall begin the Hymns, Psalms, Anthems, and Responses in their stalls, but at Mass they shall perform their Office in the middle of the Choir, standing, sitting, inclining always to the East, save at Matins they shall conform them to the Choir as much as may be, as it sheweth in Chapters XV. and XVI.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

OF THE VERSICULARS OF THE WEEK.

The two Sisters that be tabled to sing the Versicles shall sing the *Venite* and the first Verse at Matins, also the small Responses at Prime, Hours, and Complin, with all the *Benedicamus*, always together, and never alone.

OF YOUNG SISTERS.

The young Sisters shall have the elders in due reverence, and hold themselves serviceable to them at all times and in all places, giving them way to go wherever they meet them, and putting their hands to help them in bearing heavy books or any other great burden, and in all things assigned to them by the Abbess.

Also the Sisters that be with Office-bearers ought to behave to them reverently, and to take heed diligently to what is taught them, for as they be taught now, so they may teach others in time to come.

OF LAY SISTERS.

The Lay Sisters shall carefully and humbly attend to the service of the Choir Sisters, and shall discharge their office faithfully.

As the Choir Sisters are to attend to the Divine Office, therefore the Lay Sisters shall readily and diligently serve them all, in the kitchen, table, and in all other necessary matters whatsoever: for they are received for that end, and for any other duties whatsoever to be enjoined by the Abbess.

They are taken into this holy Religion, not to be sluggish, idle and negligent, but that by their continual labour and industry they may profit and help the Community.

Therefore we enjoin and command all the Lay Sisters, and each one in particular, to behave themselves humbly to the Choir Sisters in word and deed, and to serve them diligently in all their labours and services.

When a Lay Sister meets a Choir Sister she shall incline to her; if she meets the Abbess, she shall humbly with turning of her body incline to her.

They must live quietly and peaceably in their order and degree, and must in no wise intermingle or put themselves into other matters.

In Processions and at the Kissing of the Cross, they shall not go with a Choir Nun.

They must ring the bells in due time, make clean the Church, Cloister, Chapter, Dormitories, Refectory, and other places; also the utensils, and the usual vessels, and must keep them clean and polished. And they shall do any other thing that the Abbess shall bid them.

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When the Abbess shall not employ them about other affairs, they shall be present in the Choir during the time of the Divine Service; every one in her own order, as well on week days as on Holy Days; and none of them shall presume to absent herself without a reasonable cause approved by the Abbess. And if they shall come too late to the Divine Office, or to any Service either in the Church or elsewhere, or shall be negligent therein, or shall presume to absent themselves from them, they shall be proclaimed in Chapter and punished. But if to any duty they shall come late, making their inclination they may go to their places, or to their service.

The Lay Sisters who can read shall say every day the Hours of our Blessed Lady, and the Penitential Psalms, with the Fifteen Gradual Psalms, and the Litany, or some other thing assigned by the Abbess.

But let them take heed in every place that the Choir be not interrupted with their noise, or hissings with their lips, in saying anything enjoined them.

They that cannot read shall say, instead of Matins, forty *Paters*, and as many *Aves*, with one *Creed*. And as many for Vespers.

For Prime they shall say ten *Paters* and as many *Aves* with one *Creed*, and as many for every Hour, and for Complin.

OFFICE FOR THE DEAD.

The Lay Sisters shall say the same as the Choir Nuns if they can read, if not, they shall say four hundred and fifty *Paters*, and as many *Aves*, with one *Creed* after every fifty.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

OF THE OFFICE OF SACRISTAN.

To the Sacristan it belongeth to have all the ornaments of the Church in keeping, as chalices, cruets, basins, and such other, with all the copes, jewels and relics, and what she hath in her keeping she ought to keep it whole, sound, fair, clean and honest, and to repair and change it as often as need require, so that she bring up no new thing, nor do any great unwonted thing without knowledge and license of the Abbess.

Also she ought to see that the Altar cloths, albs, towels, and sundries belonging to the Altar be clean, and washed as often as need require. Also when the Priest has washed the corporals once, she with the help of her assistant, shall wash them, starch them, dry and fold them up, and keep them until required.

Also to her it belongeth to have the keeping of wax, lamps, oil, and of all other things belonging to the Church, and provide for the Church, hosts, wax candles, tapers, torches, pens, inks, ink horns, tables, and such other things as the Abbess assign her.

Also to open and shut the doors and windows of the Sisters' Choir and the Communion places, and to light and quench the tapers and candles, and snuff them in such wise and in such time that the Sisters be not grieved with the savour.

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CHAPTER XXV.

OF RINGING THE DORMITORY BELLS.

Also to the Sacristan it belongeth to ring the Dormitory bell after the form that she is assigned by her Abbess. Other things belonging to her office are set forth in the preceding chapter and in other diverse places of the present Additions.

OF RINGING OF BELLS.

Before the first peal to Evensong and Matins the Dormitory bell shall be rung for the space of one *Pater Noster* and *Ave*, except the three days before Easter. When the Sisters are to have a Dirge, that afternoon, forthwith shall be rung the first peal, and about half an hour after, the second. The first peal shall ever be one *Miserere* while, the second two, and after that the tolling with seven or eight strokes at most, so that between the first and second peal to Matins only, the great bell shall be tolled five strokes, except Easter day.

To Prime and Terce together, except Whitsunday, it shall be rung one *Miserere* while, and then each day in Lent, as oft as the first peal to Matins is at two of the clock or before, the ringer shall knock at each door quietly, where any Sister layeth that is to come to Choir; which is also to be observed at all other times, if it happens to be rung late to any service.

To Our Lady's Mass it shall be rung two *Misereres* while; and the same bell or else another, shall be tolled three strokes at each Elevation of the said Mass.

To the hour of Sext it shall be rung a *Pater Noster* and *Ave* while, to the Seven Penitential Psalms, special Processions, and discipline, the Chapter bell shall be tolled as it is wont to *De Profundis* at the grave.

After dinner and supper, whilst the Sisters go to Choir with Grace, one bell shall be rung one *Pater Noster* and *Ave*, and the same wise the first peal shall ever be rung with the last bell to Collation, and the peal to Complin after the Collation. But the second peal to Collation shall be three *Misereres* while at least. Curfew bell shall be rung with the three bells, except double Feasts; three *Misereres* while; after the Sisters have ended the Complin, so that between the tollings before and after there shall be the space of five *Aves*.

Before Easter when the bells be not rung, like signs shall be made with the clapper. Whilst any Sister layeth in passing, the great bell shall be tolled continually except certain times. And when the soul is passed, it shall be rung out three or four *Misereres* while. And it is to be known that when it is *Majus duplex* and in *Mid Lent Sunday* the

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first peals to Evensong and Matins shall be with the three smaller bells, the second with all five ; and the second peal to Collation and Complin, Curfew, Prime, Sext, and Grace after meals, shall be with the greatest bell.

If it be *Minus duplex*, the first peal shall be with three, the middle bells, and the second with four, the greatest, and the peal to Collation, Complin, and Curfew, Prime, Sext, and Grace with the fourth bell.

If it be *Inferius duplex*, the first peal shall be with the second and third bells, and the second with the three middle bells, and the long peal to Collation and peals to Complin, Curfew, Prime, Sext, and Grace, with the third bell, except All Souls' Day.

If it be *Novem lectiones*, or *de doctrina*, or *Invitatorium triplex*, or of any *commemoratio*, or *de octavis*, or *de festo trium lectionem cum regimine chori*, the first peal shall be with the second bell, and the second with the same and the third bell.

On all other days shall ring two of the smaller bells after the second form, except certain days in this place expressed.

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CHAPTER XXVI.

OF TAKING MYXTOM AND SAYING GRACE.

Aged Sisters and sick, and also young and whole, that from labour or any faintness or feebleness, or for any other reasonable cause, may not abide fasting till the Convent goeth to dinner, may, on the fasting days, except water days, take bread and drink in the Refectory after *De Profundis* at the grave, by license of the Abbess or President. On supper days they may take an egg or two, or anything ordered for them by the Officers, but none shall take any pottage of flesh meat but in the Infirmary, and this with special license of the Abbess.

Nevertheless, the Reader and Servitors every day before meat, fasting days, and others, when they take not their myxtom after *De Profundis*, may take a mess of pottage in the Refectory, or any other thing appointed by the Abbess and ordered by the Cellaress or other Officers, and this in such seasons as they may make an end thereof by the second chime.

So that none take myxtom twice a day, nor any meat and drink save only in the Refectory or Infirmary without special license from the Abbess.

OF CHIME STRIKING.

Moreover, when all service is ended, the Cellaress shall see there be no long tarrying from dinner, but as soon as the cooks be ready she shall strike the first stroke on the chime, and after the space of a *Miserere*, the Servitors shall strike two strokes, then the Convent must draw to the Refectory—and after the space of another *Miserere* while, the Abbess or President shall give three strokes for all, so that between each stroke there shall be the space of one *Ave Maria*.

By the end of the last stroke all should be in the Refectory, the Servitors standing in the appointed places with their aprons on.

For supper the Servitor shall give two strokes, and the Abbess three as stated above.

OF SAYING OF GRACE.

Whilst the President striketh, all the Convent shall stand in the Refectory in their places without the tables, before their seats, turned towards the Majesty. And when she cometh into the Refectory they shall turn and stand face to face, having their hands cross-wise in their cowl-sleeves, and as she passes by them up the middle of the Refectory they shall turn again to the Majesty, but not incline, except to the Abbess, as she passes them. Then the President, standing up on the gre of the Refectory, shall ring the bell one *Ave*, inclining to

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the Majesty, both before and after and then go and stand above all, beneath the gre, on her own side, then all inclining and standing turned towards the Majesty the Chantress, or Sub-Chantress in her absence, shall begin the Grace with note in a solemn voice, saying *Benedicite*. The President shall answer, without note, *Dominus*, and then the Convent shall proceed with the Grace, with note, as the Chantress began. On fasting days, *Edent pauperes*, &c., is said. If it be supper day they shall say *Oculi omnium in te sperant Domine*, so proceeding with the Grace under one tone, which is to be observed evermore both before dinner and supper, and after, and before all conventual drinking, so that the Chantress set the tone and rule the measure.

At *Gloria Patri*, and whilst they say *Pater Noster* and *Ave*, they shall incline face to face as they be wont, and at *Sicut erat* to *Kyrie eleison* they shall rise again and stand as they did before. But from *Pater Noster* unto Grace is ended they shall stand turned towards the Majesty.

When the Hebdomadary saith *Et ne nos* the Abbess or President shall go to her place and take her seat, and the Hebdomadary at *Benedic Domine nos* shall bless once before her with her right hand, having the ring of her Profession upon her finger, not stretching out her arm, nor bearing her hand about the Refectory, now to one side, now to another, but addressing her intention to God, she ought to pray to Him in her soul, that He will by the said blessing bless all things set, or to be set before them for their bodily sustenance for that season.

OF THE READER.

In the meanwhile the Reader shall go to the middle of the Refectory and incline before the image of Our Lady, and say *Jube Domine*. To whom the President, sitting at the table, shall answer thus on fasting days generally, *Cibo spiritualis alimonix reficiat nos Rex æternæ gloriæ*, or *Ad cœnam vitæ æternæ perducatur nos Rex æternæ gloriæ*, to which the Convent shall answer *Amen*. On supper days the President shall say this Benediction: *Mensæ cœlestis participes faciat nos Rex æternæ gloriæ*. The Convent *Amen*. Then all inclining religiously, they shall go and take their seats as they be in order, but the Reader shall go to the reading place, and the Servitors to bring in the meat.

And when all be seated, the Reader shall begin to read, distinctly and openly that all may understand it. And she must read such matter as the Abbess or Chantress assigneth, to the edifying of souls, so that none meddle with the correction of the Reader, nor make her turn again when any desireth by sign to hear any matter again save only the President. Once every week shall be read the Rules of Saint Saviour and Saint Augustine and a part of the Additions.

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At the end of dinner and supper when the President saith *Tu autem*, without delay the Reader shall answer *Tu autem Domine miserere nobis*. The Convent shall answer in a subdued voice, the Chantress taking the first note at *Deo gratias*, then the President shall ring the bell, and the Convent shall rise and stand before the tables, inclining reverently to the Majesty when they take their places, and when the President is in her place the Chantress shall say *Memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum*, or, if it is a supper day, *Confiteantur tibi Domine omnia opera tua*. The Convent shall answer *Et Sancti tui benedicant tibi*, keeping the same tone in one voice until the Antiphon of Our Lady. At *Gloria Patri* they shall incline face to face, and at *Sicut erat* rise and turn again to the Majesty, and when the Hebdomadary has said *Agimus tibi gratias*, and the Convent answered *Amen*, the Chantress shall intone the Psalm *Miserere mei Deus*, and the Convent inclining to the Majesty shall proceed with the said Psalm to the Choir, side by side processionally, the youngest first, all under one tone, the side of the Hebdomadary saying *Secundum magnam misericordiam tuam*. The other side shall answer *Et secundum multitudinem*, and when they come into Choir they shall incline as they are wont at the Desk, in the stalls, and at *Gloria Patri*, and at *Kyrie Eleison* they shall kneel down till Grace is ended with a *Pater* and *Ave*, so that the Antiphon of Our Lady, with the *preces* following and *De Profundis* be said without note.

And when the Abbess maketh the sign to rise, striking with her hand as it is wont, all shall rise and incline to the East, and at the Desk, and so go forth processionally, the youngest before, down towards the Lavatory. Before they wash their hands the Abbess or President shall say *Benedicite*, the Convent without note shall answer *Dominus*, the Abbess then says *Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini*, and the Convent answer *Qui fecit, etc.* After this they shall wash their hands as many as may be together at the Lavatory, beginning from the Abbess or President and eldest Sister to the youngest, which done, and one stroke given on the chime silence shall be loosed, and the Sisters may depart, and not before, without special leave of the President.

At supper Grace shall ever be *Edent pauperes*, and the blessing on the Reader, *Ad cœnam vitæ æternæ perducatur nos Rex æternæ gloriæ. Amen*. After supper the Chantress shall begin, *Memoriam fecit*, and the Hebdomadary *Benedictus Deus in donis, etc.*, and the same observance is to be kept in all points, both before supper and after, in washing hands and all other things as it is said before of dinner.

Furthermore, for fasting days and water days, and before con-

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ventual drinking, the Chantress shall say with note *Benedicite*, the President without note *Dominus*, and the Hebdomadary blessing the drink, with note, *Rex angelorum benedicat potum ancillarum suarum*. The Convent shall answer with note, *Amen*.

And the Reader saying *Jube Domine*, the President sitting in her place shall say this blessing with note. *Sapientia Dei Patris nos cœlestibus instruat disciplinis*. The Convent shall answer, *Amen*, incline and go to their places, and when all be seated, the President shall make a sign to the Reader to read, and when all have drunk she shall give two strokes on the bell, and the Reader shall cease, and the Convent shall say five *Aves* and another five *Aves* when she strikes again. This done the President shall say without note *Benedicite*, the Convent shall answer *Dominus*, then all shall rise, incline, and go their way. In the same wise, without note, Grace shall be said in the Infirmary and in the Parlour.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

OF LATE COMERS TO GRACE IN THE REFECTORY.

If any come late to Grace in the Refectory, or in any other place, if she come after *Gloria Patri*, she shall stand last and in the lowest place, and say her Grace till she shall have overtaken the Convent, but if *Gloria* be not ended she shall go to her place.

Nevertheless, the Hebdomadary shall always go to her place except she come in after *Et ne nos*. If any come in when Grace is ended, she shall meekly go to the middle of the Refectory, and license asked of the President, and given by a sign to say Grace, she shall say it all, inclining in the middle, that she hinder not the Servitors, then ask leave again to eat or drink by a sign, and so go to her place. This shall be observed by all, even if they have leave to be from Grace.

If any come about the middle of dinner or supper, or when they begin to take up, she shall, by leave of the President, refresh with the Reader and Servitors, yet if she be wont often to come late she shall lose a part of her portion, and be corrected in Chapter.

OF OBSERVANCE AND NURTURE AT THE TABLE.

In the Refectory in the middle of the high table, shall hang a bell, and the Abbess's seat shall be in the middle, under the image of Our Lady, where she shall sit alone, so that none sit with her in any place nor at any time take her seat. Other Sisters shall sit at the side tables in their order as they be professed, save the Prioress, who shall sit on the left side above all.

None therefore shall absent herself from Grace, nor depart until after the washing of hands.

Also sitting at table each shall keep great silence, and their sight from wandering about, and none shall stretch her hands to receive any bodily food till the soul be refreshed with spiritual food.

Wherefore, when they be seated, they shall hold their hands cross-wise in their cowl sleeves, and when the Reader hath read a clause, the space of a *Pater Noster*, they shall tie up their sleeves about their arms and take their bodily sustenance, soberly and discreetly, with reverent fear and thanksgiving to God.

And thrice in dinner time and thrice at supper, and twice at each conventual drinking, when the President giveth two strokes upon the bell, they shall cease eating, and each time joining their hands together and laying them openly on the table, and then each beside the other in their laps, folding in the finger ends, they shall say, with all reverence and inward devotion five *Aves*, in worship of the Bleeding Wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Sorrows of Our Blessed Lady, His

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Mother. None shall look upon another while they eat, or look at what is set before others, but thank God for what is set before them.

Their hands they shall have upon the table or quietly before them, their ears to the Reader, their hearts to Heaven, and charity to every Christian. Also they shall sit upright not bowing down, nor leaning upon the table with their arms or elbows, nor holding their hands under their chins, nor over their faces, nor stretch out their hands inordinately. Therefore keep they all their members with tranquillity, cut the bread fair, eat the meat honestly and religiously, hold the cup with the right hand when they drink, and stay it with first finger of the left hand.

Take they their meat and drink to their need, not too voluptuously, after the doctrine of St. Paul, all curiosity and grudging put away. No singularity of meat and drink shall be had in the Refectory without special dispensation of the Abbess, and they shall beware each one of surfeit, for nothing is more contrary to health of body than surfeit of meat and drink. Such as abstain themselves wisely for God shall have a special reward in time to come. Nevertheless, none shall take any special abstinence upon her without leave of the Abbess. It is in the power of the Abbess to dispense with the Sisters' regular fasts in time of evident need (but fasts of Church are dispensed by the Confessor).

If anything be set before any Sister other than the Convent hath, it shall be sent to the President for her leave. If when the President send anything to any Sister or Sisters, they shall not leave it untouched in any wise, desire they ever so much to abstain them, but they shall take it reverently, inclining to her a little with the body, but to the Abbess they shall rise a little and incline.

None shall make any notable sign or cast her sight openly, or throw anything with her hand from one side of the Refectory to the other, or from table to table or yet to any that sitteth beside her, but shall constrain themselves from all token of lightness, and have a care that no troublesome noise be made that might disturb the Reader or hearers, asking by sign what they will have, and not by word, so that all things in the Refectory be at peace.

The Servitors must have care that they speak not whilst they minister, nor make any great noise in setting down or taking up, or removing dishes, plates, and such like. Furthermore, when they have any nuts they shall not crack them with their teeth, but open them softly with their knives or nut-crackers, and beware of sound. Moreover, they shall wipe their knives and spoons with their napkins.

They that will not observe the said ordinances, but make

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immoderate noise, cut their fingers or hands, or spill anything on the table, shall be proclaimed and corrected in due time and place, and the cloth is to be made clean by her that soiled it, or by the Servitors of that week. How long they shall sit at dinner or supper, or at conventual drinkings, standeth in the moderation of the President as the day and time requireth. Also their cups and spoons, &c., they shall put in their drawers honest and clean, and keep them under the table or in some other place ordained by the Abbess.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF THE SERVITORS AT THE TABLE.

Grace ended before dinner and supper, and the inclination made to the Majesty, the Servitors shall go out and bring in the service as time requireth.

And first the Abbess or President shall be served, then the Prioress, and afterwards the Convent as they sit in order, beginning at the eldest, after the Prioress, and going down to the youngest, according to the Rule.

And when they serve the Abbess or President of anything they shall ever incline to her, beginning *Ave Maria* softly to the Majesty, and going forth to the table, say it before they set anything down before her, then incline again and go their way.

To the other Sisters sitting at side tables they shall not say *Ave*, nor incline at the beginning, but shall serve them reverently with an inclination at the end only, to whom each Sister, as she is served, shall incline again as oft as they receive any service from her. Nothing may be served covered to any Sister whatever be her rank, except the Abbess.

These, therefore, shall serve the Sisters without grudging, charitably, honestly, reverently, cheerfully, indifferently, gladly, patiently, and meekly—without changing of food out of favour for any person—providing their necessities, so that none be compelled to rise from the table or complain of uncharitable service.

If anything be asked of them by sign—or by a still word, if there be no sign for it—they shall incline and bring in what is asked, if it may be had; if it may not, they shall excuse them by another soft and honest sign.

Nevertheless, none ought to be importunate or over hasty in asking anything of any Servitor whilst they be in serving of another, nor grumble without a just cause. Also one of them shall always be present, and see diligently about that the Sisters lack nothing. When any go from one side of the Refectory to the other they shall incline in the middle to the Majesty or image of Our Lady.

OF THE PITTANCE.

The pittance shall first be brought before the President, that she may take thereof first. Then at her sign the Servitors shall bear it round the Refectory that every Sister may take thereof, beginning at the eldest on every side, and when all be served it shall be set again before the President, if any remain.

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OF TAKING UP OF MEALS.

About the end of meals the Convent shall set all things from them towards the outer side of the table before them, sweeping together with their napkins the crumbs, that the Servitors may the sooner take up and bear away, after the Doctrine of Our Lord Jesus, saying to His Servitors at the end of His feast: *Colligite fragmenta ne pereant.* "Gather together the fragments that they be not lost." When the President maketh a sign to take up they shall do all as they be commanded, and bear the meats to the serving house, or to another place thereto assigned. After this they shall take up the remnants, first the drinking cups, and last of all the bread and salt, beginning with the table of the youngest, ending with the Abbess or President. They shall incline to each Sister as they take them up, and they again to them as it is said before, so that what is over be dealt to the poor by outward servants according to the Rule. Nevertheless, on supper days the salt shall stand upon the tables till after supper.

OF LATTER MEALS.

When the Convent goeth forth with Grace to the Church, the Reader and Servitors shall incline to them religiously there or elsewhere as they pass by them. When they be passed they shall sit down and take their bodily sustenance as the Convent did, keeping the silence and same observance, except the reading, save they shall be served by the Sisters of the serving house, and after their dinner and supper say their Grace, without note, going to the Church procession-wise like the Convent did, the youngest before, standing and kneeling in the Choir before the stalls; and when they have washed their hands at the Lavatory they may speak, and not before.

For collation on fasting days, the tablecloths are not put on the table, but on the Abbess's table, and where the Prioress sits the tablecloth shall be folded up and put across the table, and bread shall be laid on each table.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

OF OBSERVANCE OF THE DORMITORY.

In the Dormitory none shall behold another, nor make sign to another without a reasonable cause, but all shall there keep strict silence.

There also none shall incline to others, although it be the Abbess that passeth them, but all shall go forth meekly with their veils down over their eyes.

Nor shall any make any noise thereof of unrest about making their beds or shaking of clothes, or removing straw, or any other thing, from Curfew bell unto Prime, neither from dinner until three of the clock after noon.

They who make any unrestful noise in their sleep, or for those who are unable to endure such unquietness, another place shall be found where they may sleep without disturbing others. Their beds shall be made of boards, fast nailed together, and stuffed with straw, and they shall have as many clothes on them as need requireth after the discretion of the Abbess. Two shall not sleep in the same bed. They shall sleep in their stamins, and on their heads they shall have a linen night-kerchief. If any desire to lie in her cowl, none shall presume this without special license of the Abbess.

In their beds they shall sit and give thanksgiving to God with some special, but not long prayer ere they sleep. After this they shall bless themselves *In Nomine Patris*, and sleep with silence in peace, and likewise shall they do when they rise to Matins, so that they may say with the Prophet: "*Si memor fui tui super stratum meum, in matutinis meditabor in te: quia fuisti adjutor meus.*"

All shall be in the Dormitory in due time after Complin, and none shall go out thereof without special license of the Abbess or Searchers.

All the Office-bearers must see that the doors and windows be securely locked before they go to bed, and the Searchers must see that the Sisters are in their cells, the lights quenched, as it be expressed in the XXX. Chapter.

Nevertheless, there shall be a light always burning in a sure place in the Dormitory, winter and summer, from the going down to the uprising of the sun. When a Sister carrying a light after dark meets another, she shall turn the light from the other's face, but if any desire a light, they shall courteously give it to them. They shall have a great care how they bear the light about, how they quench it, that all danger of fire may be averted. Moreover, none shall go into the cells of others without special license of the Abbess except those that be

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assigned to search the Dormitory every night, and those who have other Sisters under their care.

Nevertheless, if any suddenly fall sick in the night in the Dormitory, then she may knock or call some Sister to her cell as softly as she can to help her.

And if any be importune in her crying out, or in making a noise, she is to be had to the Infirmary for unresting of others, but if she can abide there and not unrest others unto morning, then a Sister or two may abide with her.

OF THE CLOISTER.

In the Cloister all must keep silence and behave them religiously, seriously, and soberly, and not go too fast nor dissolutely, and when they meet together there, or in any other place out of the Dormitory, each shall incline to the other, a little bowing the head, the younger, namely, to the elder, each having the other in reverence, which is to be observed when they give or receive anything, or do any service for the other, thinking verily, that all such reverence is done to God. But to the Abbess, whenever they shall meet her, or pass by her, or she by them, except in the Dormitory, as is said before, they shall turn to her and meekly incline with all the body, for love without reverence is a childish love.

Nor shall any presume to go without her veil and crown upon her head.

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CHAPTER XXX.

OF THE Prioress AND OF THE SEARCHERS.

When the Office of Prioress is void, the Abbess, by the advice of some of the elder and serious Sisters, having the dread of God, shall appoint another. Which all, condescending and consenting unto one Sister professed, able, wise, discreet, and of good name and fame, the Abbess shall set her on her left side in the Chapter House, at the end of the same bench on which she herself is wont to sit. And then, all the Convent sitting, the Abbess shall say: "Lo, Sisters, see and take heed that in our absence you all obey our Sister here, whom I have ordained to be Prioress of our Monastery. And I will that you obey her in all things belonging to the keeping of the Order, like as you would do to me if I were present." To which words all shall incline in token of assent. After this, if it be Chapter day, Chapter ended with the *preces* following, the Convent shall go straight to the Choir processionally, the youngest before, and the Abbess behind leading the Prioress on her left side, and all standing in their stalls, Choir to Choir, the Abbess shall take another Sister with her, and stall the Prioress, setting her down in the first stall of the left side of the Choir, and then go to her own stall.

And then all the Convent shall go to the Prioress and congratulate her, and after that return to their stalls, kneel down Choir to Choir, and say a *Pater* and an *Ave* devoutly, which ended, and a sign made by the Abbess, all shall rise, incline to the East, and soberly go their way.

And it is to be marked that the Prioress in Choir, Chapter, and Refectory, and in all other places shall keep the left side, standing and sitting above all the other Sisters, though she be the youngest of all in the Order, going in Processions with the eldest Sister of the right side, or else behind all, when the number is odd in absence of the Abbess.

Furthermore, as long as she standeth Prioress she shall not be called by her proper name, but by the name of her Office, Mother Prioress. If she be found vicious or proud in her Office, or a despiser of the Holy Rule or the Statutes of the Monastery, the Abbess, after certain private warnings, shall thrice warn her openly in the presence of all, or of two or three of the elder Sisters. And if she will not amend by this means, she shall be put out of Office, and corrected according to the greatness of her tresspass, and after this she shall sit in her order as the others do, and be called by her proper name, never to receive Office after, except she change and verily amend her old conditions and ill-manners effectually. Moreover, in the absence of the

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Abbess, the Prioress shall fulfil all her spiritual offices, except the things that concern the Hebdomadary's Office.

So that in all high feasts she shall read the second Lesson at Matins. Furthermore, in absence of the Abbess, she shall do nothing about correction of faults, but at commandment of the Abbess.

Also it is to be noted that amongst the Sisters shall ever be four Searchers at least, of which the Prioress shall always be chief by her Office, and she shall never change her Office without great and reasonable cause.

But all other Offices may be changed every year or oftener, as the Abbess seeth it expedient by the advice of the more serious part of her Sisters. And these shall be known and called Searchers, for to them principally, and particularly to the Prioress, it belongeth to have a good eye about, to search diligently, if the Sisters behave them religiously in every place, and in all times and seasons, and how regular observances of the Order and silence are kept, and to proclaim such in the Chapter as they find culpable of any fault.

Wherefore, the Abbess shall not set any Sisters to this Office generally, nor choose them by order of Profession. She shall select out such as be of serious manner and condition, of Godly life, and good example, such as long have stood in regular observance, and can wisely teach others, such as have a zeal to keep justice in Godly charity, such as will for no dread, hate, nor love, spare the truth, but be occupied all they can and may, to keep the Commandments of God, and the precepts of the Abbess, and such as she may surely trust to lay part of her charge upon them, be they the youngest or the eldest in religion.

Of which Searchers, one at least, appointed by the Abbess, soon after Complin, shall every night search and see if all the Sisters are in their cells, whether they be there alone, or if any be out of their cells at the hour assigned, and what is the cause, and whether the lights be quenched. But none shall search any Sister's cell nor Office without special command of the Abbess.

These, therefore, ought to be very mirrors of good example, and of religious behaving to others, proclaiming their own faults most meekly, and most obediently taking their corrections, knowing for certain that they stand in more peril than others if they negligently fall and trespass against the Rules and Statutes, whilst the Abbess putteth her singular trust in them to see the Rule be kept in her absence.

Wherefore they ought to be heard reverently in their admonitions and proclamations of others, for to strive with them or against them

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is a more grievous fault. Nevertheless, these be never wont to be disciplined for their faults while they stand in the Office of Searcher, but the Abbess may discharge any Sister from her Office, and command her to take a discipline, and afterwards charge her with the same Office again, or another, as she seeth expedient.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

OF THE TREASURER'S OFFICE.

Under the keeping of the Treasurer and of her helpers are all the muniments of the Monastery and temporal goods, in gold and silver and other gifts. And if it happens that the Abbess, from any reasonable cause, may not be about the direction of the outward matters of the Monastery, then these two, in her stead and name, shall attend to such matters to hear and answer, but not to meddle with such as the Abbess should do herself, except the Abbess's Office be vacant.

In the Treasury House there shall be a chest with two different locks and keys, the Treasurer keeping one and her Assistant the other, so that neither of them may open, nor bring in nor take out, nor give or receive anything out of it without the knowledge of the other for the more true witness to be had.

And as oft as any Procurator or Receiver bring any gold or silver there, in the presence of the Abbess, it shall be received, and by bills indented with sufficient writing acknowledged, and then put in the said chest.

From this money they shall deliver also by bills indented with sufficient writing, to every Officer within and without, as their Office requireth, according to the command of the Abbess, so that they be not negligent in anything—nor make delay in any payment when they are able to pay forthwith.

Also they shall provide and pay for medicines and such like at the disposition of the Abbess.

OF THE CHAMBERER'S OFFICE.

The Chamberer shall have all the clothes in her ward, that pertain to the bodily clothing of the Sisters, night and day, in their cells and in the Infirmary, as well of linen as woollen, seeing they are made, repaired, and kept, as may be necessary, and to be careful in the keeping of them that they be not destroyed by moths, etc.

OF THE CHAMBER'S OFFICE.

So she shall provide all the bedding, and all such other things that are necessary after the disposition of the Abbess, which in no wise shall be over-curious, but plain and homely, without weaving in of any strange colours of silk or silver, having all things for utility and nothing of vanity, after the Rule.

She shall also provide the table-cloths, handkerchiefs, girdles, scissors, needles, pins, thread, and all other things of this kind. The Sisters shall wear a pin-cushion attached to their girdle, and a pair of scissors.

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OF THE OFFICE OF THE CELLARESS.

The Cellaress shall provide for meat and drink for sick and whole, and for meat and drink, clothes and wages for servants of the household, and she shall have all the vessels and stuff of the household under her keeping and care, keeping it clean, whole and honest. So that when she receives new, she must restore the old to the Abbess. Ordering for all necessaries belonging to all the offices concerning the bodily food of man, in the Kitchen, Bakery, Pantry, Cellar, Refectory, Infirmary, Parlour, and such other outside and inside, attending diligently that all the linen, utensils, and other things in her office, be clean, profitable, and pleasant to all, as she is commanded by her Abbess.

For the Sisters she shall every day order two manners of pottage, or at least one, and that is the best of all. If there be two, one may be served of flesh or fish, after the day is, and the other of vegetables. She shall also order for two kinds of meats, of flesh, or of fish, one fresh the other powdered, boiled or roasted or otherwise according to her discretion, and after the day, time or need requireth, as the market and purse will stretch. Besides all this, she shall order for a pittance, and take good heed that all be wholesome and well seasoned, tender and good, and that it be honestly served forth all hot or otherwise as the meats requireth, both in due measure in quantity and quality. If the portion be small it is to be supplemented with a pittance, if it be good and sufficient to go all round, then there is no need that the pittance be given.

On fish days she shall order for white meats, if they may be taken by the Rule, besides the fish as it is said before.

For supper she shall order either fish or white meats or anything allowed by the Rule, light for the digestion and good for bodily health, after the discretion of the Abbess, so that the servants of God may continue strong in His service.

On water days she shall order for buns or new bread, two manners of vegetables at least, also fruit, and this in competent measure, either roasted or boiled. Barley-water, tea, or coffee shall be allowed.

OF THE KEEPERS OF THE WHEELS AND GATES.

For the keepers of the wheel two Sisters shall be appointed by the Abbess, and by the same wheel all goods shall be taken in and delivered out; which none shall do but they and certain Officers as Treasurer, Sacristan, Vestier, Cellaress and such others, without special license of the Abbess.

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These therefore ought to have careful attendance that as often as they hear any ringing or knocking, by night or by day, they go thither at least one of them to see what they will, and to give them an answer, in silence times and others, without the multiplying of words or telling of tales to no purpose, but their cause known, and the answer in few words given, they shall shut the wheel and go their way. Also they must have wariness of much speech there or of much ringing without a needful cause—for except for their Office they ought to speak no more than other Sisters, without the license of the Abbess, and without her counsel or license they shall tell no message to any Sisters, nor receive nor deliver anything small or great for themselves or for any other.

All the Sisters shall keep silence there, except the aforesaid Officers, for their Office.

And after the said form all other Officers shall keep their Office at the grate, gates, and in all other places, so that no gate nor door be opened outside while the Sisters are present, that they may not be seen by seculars; that they are honest and clean in their Office, doing nothing wittingly against the will of their Abbess, or of the Searchers assigned by the Abbess to have oversight of every such Office, as oft and as many as she shall see expedient. Also she that shall shut the garden gates shall knock loudly thereon before shutting them, that no Sister be left out in the garden at night.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

OF THE INFIRMARY, PARLOUR AND INFIRMARIES.

Since our Lord Jesus Christ taketh what is done to the sick as if it were done to Himself, the Abbess ought to have great care and tenderness of them, wherefore like as there be divers infirmities, so ought there to be diverse places for them. One for all manners of sickness as is the common Infirmary, another for them that be recovering as is the common Parlours.

To the keeping of the sick shall be deputed such a Sister by the Abbess that dreadeth God, having a diligence about them for His love, and well skilled for to do service to them, strong enough to lift them up and lead them from place to place, when need is, to Church, or Infirmary Chapel, and can exhort and stir up and give comfort to them on spiritual matters.

Often change their beds and clothes, give them medicine, and minister to them all other necessaries night and day as need requireth, after the counsel of the Physician and the precept of the Abbess.

She must have much patience with the sick, that they may thereby get them an everlasting crown.

The sick ought not to be importunate, nor weary their Infirmarians, desiring now one thing, now another; they ought to think inwardly, that if they patiently suffer their bodily sickness in this present life, it shall stand for their Purgatory in time to come, and for a little pain here easily suffered, they shall get their everlasting reward.

None shall speak to the sick nor come where they be without the license of the Abbess—except the Infirmarians—unless they be called to help the sick. They may however visit the sick, with the Abbess's leave, remembering that our Lord said: "I was sick and you visited Me."

Moreover the Sisters in the Infirmary shall keep the same observances in saying of Grace and keeping of silence with such others as the Convent doth in the Refectory, unless the sickness be greater, or that the Abbess give license to speak for the comfort of the sick.

Grace in the Infirmary shall be the same as in the Refectory for those convalescent as for those able to take food in sufficient quantity to form a meal.

Also after they be seated, one of them shall read some good lesson ere they begin to eat, or else keep their silence till the President says *Benedicite*, then they shall answer *Dominus*, and then

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they may speak in moderation, so that they exceed not their words nor time of sitting, nor yet speak any uncharitable or ill words of any person.

And the same observance and form shall be kept in the Parlours.

OF THE CONVALESCENT.

When anyone is convalescent or recovering from her sickness, and desires to return again to the Community duties, first of all she shall go to the Chapter with the rest, whether it be Chapter day or not. Then she shall prostrate herself before the Abbess as it is said before in Chapter I., to whom the Abbess shall say: "What do you say?" And she shall answer: *Mea Culpa*. Then the Abbess shall say: *Surgite* or "Rise up," then rising up and kneeling before the Abbess she shall say: "Mother, with your leave I have been for some time in the Infirmary, and I have transgressed in meat, drink, and many other ways, not keeping the regular times of eating, drinking, sleeping, and the like, wherefore I do crave mercy and pardon." And then the Abbess shall impose upon her some penance. Then being bidden by the Abbess she shall sit down in her place. And the same shall be observed by all the Sisters before returning to their Community duties after being ill.

OF ANOINTING OF THE SICK.

Furthermore, when any Sister is to be anointed, the Infirmarian shall order seven balls of wool in a cup, and some salt or bran in a saucer, and a basin and ewer of warm water with a towel, all being placed upon a firm table, which shall be covered with a clean white cloth, that they may be ready for the anointing. And it is to be noted that the Infirmary must never be without a Cross and Holy Water, nor without a Blessed Candle.

When the sign is given the Sisters shall assemble in the Choir, and from there go processionally with the Chaplain to the Infirmary, the seniors going first. On their way they shall recite the *Seven Penitential Psalms*, and continue them during the anointing. They that are to be anointed shall ask forgiveness of the Abbess and of all the Sisters in a convenient time for all the bad example which they have given. From the time that they be anointed unto their departure, or until they be out of danger, they shall have at least two Sisters deputed by the Abbess to attend on them day and night.

OF THE PRAYERS FOR THOSE THAT BE ANOINTED.

And nine days together after any Sister is anointed, if they live so long, the Sisters shall say, daily kneeling in their Choir, side by side, without note, these *preces* following *Miserere mei Deus*, with

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Gloria Patri, Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison, Pater, Ave Maria, Et ne nos, Ostende nobis, etc., Oremus, Omnipotens Sempiternus Deus salus æterna; if they shall pass, then shall they say this Collect, *Deus cui proprium*. Nevertheless, such Sisters who cannot say the said prayers, shall say each day instead thereof, nine *Paters* and *Aves*, and a *Credo*.

OF THEM THAT ARE IN PASSAGE.

When any Sister lieth in passage the great bell shall be tolled, and the Convent shall come together and say the *Litany* and *Suffrages* that belong thereto, kneeling beside the body or else in the Choir.

And after this, if the soul be passed, they shall say *De profundis*, with *Deus cui proprium*, and *Fidelium Deus*, then they shall take a discipline what day or time of year it be.

Nevertheless, if any pass whilst the Convent is at Divine Service, the Abbess shall command certain Sisters to say the said *Suffrages*, and after, the other Sisters, who have not said them, shall say them alone or with another Sister, or in the Choir altogether, for this is an observance which all are bound to fulfil.

Of the other *Suffrages* to be said within the *Thirty days* for every Sister after the time of their passage, is shown forth in these Additions.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

OF THE ABBESS AND HOW SHE SHALL BEHAVE HERSELF.

The Abbess ought to be Mother to the whole congregation of Sisters, of good name and fame, of honest life and holy conversation, serious in manner, prudent and wary, not suspicious, not too great a talker, but sober, chaste, mild, meek, benign and peaceable, dreader of God, and having Him ever before her eyes, loving none more than another, but such as she finds better in good deeds and meek obedience. Yet she shall not suffer them to be more cherished than others, except sickness, old age, or need require it.

As the Abbess is the conservator of the Order, she shall attend diligently that the Rule be kept in all points among the Sisters, and as she is Head and Lady of the Monastery, she is to know how the goods therein are disposed of, and she shall have a great wariness that there be nothing sealed with the common seal without the consent of her Council, nor is any other seal or signet to be used for documents than the common one.

And the Abbess ought to have great wariness that she take not over much counsel of seculars without the knowledge of her Council, for many religious have suffered great tribulations because they have revealed the secrets of their Monastery to seculars. But if any hard case happen in the Monastery, common prayer shall first be had, and before such matters go outside, she shall treat with some of the most discreet Sisters, or the holier and more discreet part of the congregation thereto called, if it be expedient, or else with all the whole congregation.

Also she shall have great care that she do not misuse her free power, nor fall into the sin of propriety, nor appear more notable in her habit, nor have any more delicate meat prepared for her than the Convent hath, except in case of sickness or feebleness, or any other reasonable case requireth it, for the higher she stands above others, the more she be bound to observe the precepts of the Rule.

Of the sick she ought to have great care, that they be not served negligently, and she shall not forget to dispense sometimes the whole for their comfort and recreation.

She shall suffer no dogs, nor animals, birds or fowls to be kept as pets within the enclosure, nor any other wonder that might stir to lightness or cause any vice to grow or increase.

She also may speak in silence time in all places, so that it be of the very necessities of the Monastery, and she may also license others to do the same.

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The Abbess shall search the Sisters' cells and other places once or more in the year, to see that each Sister hath her necessaries and no more, and therefore they shall lay their things together so openly—if they know when she is to search, which she is not bound to tell—that they may all be readily seen at first sight, without any concealment, for they who wittingly hide anything from their Superior or from any assigned by her to search, shall be corrected. Moreover, as the Abbess is to attend to many things, and may not every time be among the Sisters, she shall have a little house or cell allotted for her, where she may speak with the Sisters and treat of matters of the Monastery, and there she may eat and drink and sleep as often as she may not come in due time to the Refectory or Dormitory. Two Sisters, honest, peaceable, and trustworthy, such as she will choose, or at least one, shall attend continually day and night ministering to her diligently and obediently of all her necessaries.

Therefore, the Abbess, remembering that she is frail, made of the dust of the earth, ought to be merciful to those that are frail.

And for that she be set in authority, she ought to revolve often in mind that the more is committed to her, the more shall be asked of her, knowing well that she has taken hard things upon her to rule souls, and so to conform them to live in harmony with one another. Thinking, therefore, what great charge she has taken upon her, and to whom she must yield a reckoning, and that it behoveth to see how she may profit, more than to stand on her authority, exalting mercy in her judgment as she may get the mercy of God to herself, hate the vices and love her subjects, working prudently to correct their faults, having evermore her own frailty in mind, and thinking that the bruised reed is not to be broken.

She must see that the Novices be instructed not only in the discipline and ceremonies of the Order, but much more in the exercise of the virtues of humility and obedience, and all kinds of mortification, and corrected by their Mistress according to her precept. Moreover, after the time of probation is ended and Profession made, till such time as, by the judgment of the Abbess they shall seem well mortified, proved and promoted in the aforesaid virtues, it shall be good to submit them unto a Mistress. Moreover, for so much as it is just and good that they who will not use their liberty and equality well with others, should be deprived of it, at least for a time. Hence it is that the Superior may submit anyone that is too negligent in Choir or in any other regular action whatsoever, or who is given to ease, or who is passionate and turbulent, or too unquiet in her behaviour, speech, or in any way misbehave herself, to the charge of another, according as

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it is said of the Novices, till such times as she be reformed and brought again to the regular mortification of her tongue and passions, and to the observances in Choir and other places.

If it so happen that one be less apt or fit for one thing, she may be profitably tried in another Office. Nevertheless, the Abbess shall suffer no vice to spring up, but prudently and with charity kill it, studying more to be loved than feared.

Moreover, in these cases, the Bishop Visitor may visit and correct or deprive the Abbess of her Office.

- 1.—If the Abbess sell or alienate or else change the goods of the Monastery lawfully gotten for goods of which it is doubtful if they be rightfully gotten or no, she is to be deprived whether she did it with or without the consent of the Sisters ;
- 2.—Also if the Abbess or any Sister or any other person of the Monastery, upon what precept or colour soever, should give anything to the Bishop except meat and drink, for any Visitation by him to be done in the Monastery, for the which she shall be deposed from her Office, besides the appointed penance ;
- 3.—Also, if the Abbess, or any Sister occupying her stead, after three warnings, provide not the necessaries of the Sisters, she is deprived and never to be promoted to Office after ;
- 4.—Also, if the Abbess or any Sister purchase or attempt to purchase anything against the Rule, they are to be deprived of Office, and be incapable of holding the Office of Abbess for evermore ;
- 5.—Also if the Abbess fail to correct faults or trespasses in herself or others, whereby infamy groweth to the Monastery, she shall be duly corrected by the Bishop ;
- 6.—If she be so aged that she may not properly or sufficiently perform her Office, or labour under any incurable sickness, or have more zeal for her carnal friends than God and souls, to the hurt of the Rule, or else be a despiser of the Holy Rule and of the health of the Sisters ;
- 7.—If she be a dissipater of the goods of the Monastery, or be negligent in her Office, and by no admonition will amend.

In which and all other like cases, if it be the Abbess, she shall be warned three times secretly by the elder or more serious Sisters, with charity and due reverence, and if she will not hear, then she shall be spoken to openly before all the Sisters, and prayed with due reverence to amend, and if she will not, the Bishop shall amend her. And if

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she amend not by these means, the Bishop shall depose her. If any Abbess from age or impotence, or incurable sickness, as it is said before, or for any cause allowable, freely give up her Office, she shall remain in charge till the election of another.

OF THE KEYS.

Moreover, there shall be two keys of the enclosure door, differing one from the other. One of these keys shall be in the keeping of one of the Searchers, and the other in the Abbess's charge, so that one without the other may not open the enclosure door. The keys of the various Offices shall be in the keeping of the respective Office-bearers, yet so that the Abbess may have a key of every place and Office.

OF THE EXPENSES OF THE MONASTERY AND THE GENERAL ACCOUNTS.

The lawful expenditures of the Monastery are reputed the meats and clothing of the persons in the Monastery, and the servants of the same, with their wages. Gifts, fees, and the like, also the building of the Monastery and the repairing thereof, and of all the places and buildings belonging to the same. The expenses also of the Physician, medicines, and the entertaining of the Bishop and others that do frequent the Monastery for the good of the same.

It is a lawful necessity if a Procurator should have to make a journey to Rome, or to the Courts of the same, or to Parliament, or to any other such place. Also if any of the houses of the Convent (which God permit not) should be burnt or should fall down, or should threaten to fall in ruin, or haply, if any substance thereof should be stolen; also if the books or bells, clothes or goods, cattle, sheep or horses, or the like, which are for the service of the Monastery, should be stolen, burnt, destroyed, or die. All which things, and expenses being deducted, and the burdens of the year following being intimately considered, and provision made for them, the rest of the things are reputed superfluous. And therefore on the morrow of All Saints, or the Circumcision of Our Lord, they shall be faithfully distributed abroad to the poor and to those who are in need.

But this is to be understood only when the Monastery is fully endowed and completely built.

When, therefore, after seven or fifteen weeks of the computation of accounts which are wont to be made before the aforesaid feasts of All Saints or the Circumcision of Our Lord, the Abbess, before some of the seniors or senior Sisters shall take a general account every year of all the goods of the Monastery from the Procurators abroad, and likewise examine all the accounts, receipts, expenditures, etc.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

OF CHRISTMAS.

On Christmas Eve the Martyrology shall be sung with solemnity. In the Choir the Sacristan shall prepare a Credence table, upon which she shall place the Martyrology and two torches.

At the end of Prime the Sisters shall go in the usual manner to the Chapter House, each carrying a lighted taper. This procession shall be preceded by a Sister carrying the Crucifix, accompanied by two torch-bearers carrying lighted torches, then the Sister appointed to sing the Martyrology shall follow carrying the Martyrology. In the Chapter House the Lectern shall be covered with a purple cloth. The Sister on entering shall go to the Lectern and place the Martyrology on it. She standing there, two torch-bearers standing the one on her right and the other on her left hand. When the Sisters be all in their places, she shall begin the Martyrology. At the words, *In Bethlehem, Judæa*, etc., all shall kneel down, except the Sister singing the Martyrology and the torch-bearers, and at the words "*Nativitas Domini nostri Jesu Christi secundum carnem*," the Sisters shall prostrate on the ground. The Sister, when she has sung "*secundum carnem*," with the torch-bearers likewise shall prostrate.

After a few seconds in silence, when the sign is given, all rise and then sit down, the Sister who sang the Martyrology and the torch-bearers, lying aside their torches, shall go to their places, and the Martyrologist of that week shall go to the Lectern and take up the Lesson in the ordinary tone, beginning with the words "*Eodem die*."

OF TWELFTH DAY.

Also on the Twelfth Day the same observances shall be kept in the reading of the *Martyrology* that was on Christmas.

OF THE PURIFICATION.

In the Feast of the Purification, the Abbess is to be served of her taper first amongst the Sisters, and after her the Prioress, and after them the elder Sisters as they be in order, and at last the youngest. At the Procession they shall say or sing that which is appointed in the *Processionale*.

In the Mass of this day the Sisters shall hold their lighted candles during the *Gospel*, and from the "*Sanctus*" till after the *Priest's Communion*. For this purpose the attendant shall leave her place whilst the "*Gradual*" is being sung, and taking a wax taper shall light the Abbess's candle, also the youngest Sister shall do the same to the Sister who is first in each division of the Stalls. The same shall be done before the *Elevation* after the *Sanctus* has been sung.

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When the Sisters stand Choir to Choir, they shall hold their candles in their right hand, but when they are turned towards the Altar, those on the right hand hold them in their right hand, while those on the left hold them in their left hand. The hand should be about the middle of the candle, and it should be so carried that the light should be about the height of the eyes of her who carries it.

OF ASH WEDNESDAY.

Each Sister along with another, before taking of ashes, or after, shall kneel and say devoutly in the Choir the *Seven Penitential Psalms* and the *Litany*, so that they may be the better prepared for the General Absolution. And the order to be observed in taking of ashes shall be the same as for Holy Communion.

OF PALM SUNDAY.

On Palm Sunday the Sisters shall have Procession, before the which the Palms shall be distributed after the form of distribution of candles on Candle-Mass Day or Purification of Our Lady. And this week all shall give themselves to devout prayer, remembering Our Lord's Passion, and that He prayed for sinners on the Cross.

OF HOLY THURSDAY.

On Holy Thursday the Sisters shall say the *Seven Penitential Psalms* and *Litany* as they did on Ash Wednesday.

On that day the Prioress shall see that plenty of hot water be prepared for the Sisters, that they may wash their feet in preparation for the Maundy. And the Sacristan shall order two towels and two basins at least of warm water, with a decoction of aromatic plants therein, to be in readiness when the time arrives.

From the beginning of Evensong on this day until the Vespers of Easter Eve, the Sisters shall sing their Service in a lower tone and more devoutly, in reverence of Our Lord's Passion, as it were in the manner of mourning, yet not on too low a note nor too subdued.

OF THE MAUNDY.

Furthermore, for Our Lord Jesus Christ, Sovereign Master of all meekness, Who of His inestimable and profound humility, first and principally began and taught unto His well-beloved disciples in the time of that most worthy Feast and Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, how the most excellent and singular observance of His Maundy is to be kept; therefore the Abbess, laying aside the dignity of her Office, ought to follow the footsteps of Him in all that she may in the fulfilling of the said observance, washing and wiping the feet of her spiritual daughters and children, as it is kept for a perpetual memory

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and example in other religious Orders. In what manner it is to be observed Our Lord showed Himself, in that He put water into a basin, and brought it also, and set it down by the feet of His disciples, and full meekly and lowly, with an inward fervent charity, kneeling and bowing down His most holy Body and sweetest Hands to their feet, washed them personally, and wiped them lovingly, as His most familiar and special chosen ones, without any manner of obsequience or ministering of other. Nevertheless, considering how unworthy and far off from the perfection of Him, and so bearing in mind and obeying the old usages and customs of the Holy Fathers, this form is and ought to be kept in this Monastery for evermore.

The Sisters' Evensong ended on Maundy Thursday, all shall go processionally to the Chapter House in their whole Habit, and take their places without any delay. The singers shall sit together side by side, so that no discord be made in the singing. And whilst the Abbess taketh off her mantle and tieth up the sleeves of her cowl, and arrayeth herself by the help of her Sisters, the Convent shall prepare their feet for the washing. When the Abbess cometh in at the door, with two Sisters following her in their cowls, and bearing two basins of warm water after her, no Sister shall then rise, nor incline to her, for she cometh as a minister, but the Chantress shall at once intone the Anthem *Mandatum novum*. Which Anthem and all other things following is to be sung in such a manner that nothing be omitted, and that they cease not singing till the Prioress come in again after the washing of the Abbess's feet.

First, therefore, the Abbess shall go to the Prioress, or to her that is President for that time, and kneeling down with all meekness and inward devotion, she shall take her right foot in her left hand, and pouring water thereon thrice, with her right hand wash it, and with the towel, with which she is girded, wipe it, and after making the Sign of the Cross on the Sister's foot, she shall kiss it; the Sister that is washed somewhat holding up her foot to the Abbess, that she may the more easily do her Office of meekness. Which done, she shall do the same to the other foot. Then both rising and inclining to each other, she that is washed shall say to the Abbess, *Misereatur vestri spiritus Deus*. To whom the Abbess shall answer, *Et dimittat vobis omnia peccata vestra*. And after this, she that is washed shall sit down again, and the Abbess shall serve all the other Sisters the same way, and after the same form, beginning with the eldest first on the right side, and that side all served she shall go to the other side, and do as she did to the right side, inclining religiously in the middle as she passeth across. And when she hath washed

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both sides, she shall wash the feet of her ministers, two other Sisters holding the basins to her in the meanwhile, and then she shall incline again in the middle, and go out and take off the towel, and then come in again with her whole regular Habit, and prepare her own feet for the washing.

When, therefore, the Abbess cometh in again, the Convent shall rise and incline to her as they be wont, sitting again when she is seated. And then the Prioress or President shall incline, and go out and gird herself with another long towel about her cowl, and so come in and wash the Abbess's feet, assisted by the ministration of the said two Sisters, who ministered to the Abbess. And when she hath done, she shall incline again, and go out with the said Sisters, and after removing the towel, they shall, without any delay, come in again in their whole regular Habit, inclining and taking their places, and then the Convent shall cease singing. Which done, the Abbess shall rise with all the Sisters, and turning to the Majesty, they shall say the *Preces* with note as it showeth in the *Processionale*. And all things ended, they shall incline and go their ways, and then the Hebdomadary shall make the first sign to the Cup of Charity, at which all ought to be, both the sick and well if they may, for the solemnity of the Holy Maundy of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

GOOD FRIDAY.

On Good Friday it is the custom to keep silence till after dinner, except it be in a case of need, and all the Sisters are to be occupied in devout prayer and the saying of the Psalter.

On this day all shall go barefoot in the Procession for the *Seven Penitential Psalms*, except the sick and such as be licensed by the Abbess. The *Litany* is to be read by the Abbess in the middle of the Choir, all the Sisters lying prostrate about her. Also it is to be noted that their prostrations at the Adoration of the Cross shall be religiously and orderly done, two and two together, as they be in order, going barefoot. The Abbess shall be alone, and after her the Prioress with the eldest Sister. The Sacristan shall take heed that there be prepared carpets and cushions, two candles burning in candlesticks on each side of the Cross; and she shall sit and hold the Cross, giving it to the adorers thereof, that they may kiss it. Whilst she is making her Adoration, another Sister shall hold it and present it to her, and when she has done so, she shall again take it as she did at first, holding it for the other Sisters. It is to be noted, moreover, that no Lay Sister shall at any time go with a Choir Sister in the Adoration of the Cross, nor at any other time.

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For the Adoration of the Cross there shall be three prostrations, the two first of the long veyne, at each of which is said one *Pater noster*, one *Ave Maria* and *Adoramus te, Christe, benedicimus tibi, quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum*. The last prostration is under the short veyne, and only *Adoramus te, Christe, benedicimus tibi, quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum*, is said.

EASTER EVE.

On Easter Eve the Sisters shall sing their Evensong solemnly, as they be wont on High Feasts.

Also on Easter Day they shall Adore the Cross with prostrations barefoot, as they did on Good Friday.

In the Procession before Mass shall be four torches, two going before and two behind the Blessed Sacrament.

ST. MARK AND THE ROGATION DAYS.

St. Mark falling in Easter week or on a Sunday, there shall be neither Fast nor Procession that week. On St. Mark's and Rogation days they shall go in Procession as set forth in the *Processionale*. On these days the Holy Water bearer shall go first, casting Holy Water on each side as she goeth, then the Cross with torches before, and the image of Our Lady following. And when the *Antiphons* or *Responses* are ended, two Sisters shall sing the *Litany*, the rest of the Choir repeating it. The Chantress must take heed that they return to the Choir betimes, that there be no need to add anything more than is expressed in their books.

WHIT SUNDAY.

During the singing of *Terce* on Whit Sunday and the two following days, the Sisters shall hold lighted tapers in their hands, and heartily and with inward devotion they shall seek comfort and grace of the Holy Ghost whilst they sing the holy hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*.

On *Relic Sunday*, the *Relics* shall be carried in Procession, with due reverence, not bare, but covered with gold or silver, as the Rule prescribes, or at least with cloth of gold or silk.

On the Feast of *Corpus Christi*, four torches shall be borne in Procession as they were on Easter Day.

ALL SOULS' DAY.

On All Souls' Day the Sisters shall keep great silence, except it be for a needful thing, occupying themselves in the saying of the David Psalter and Dirge, with other prayers and devotions. Nevertheless, after dinner they may speak, such as have ended their duty and none else.

The Office and Mass on this day shall be that which is in the *Rituale Romanum*.

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CHAPTER XXXV.

OF THE ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF THE ABBESS.

No Sister shall be chosen to be Abbess (as the Sacred Council of Trent hath decreed, Sess. XXV., Ch. VII.) except she be born in lawful wedlock, be forty years of age or more, and have completed the tenth year of her Religious Profession, except in cases declared by the same Council.

No Sisters in the same Election shall, either after or before, give or minister any cause or occasion at all of impediment or disturbance among themselves, or with others, under the punishment allotted for the most grievous faults, and of losing their voices in the said elections.

All precedent or foregoing treaty among themselves for whom they shall vote or not vote, for whom they shall give their voice or not give it, and the like, is most strictly prohibited under the same punishment, and of losing their voice for ever.

The Election of the Abbess shall be by secret voting, the Suffrages being given by each and every Professed Sister in the presence of the Bishop, Superior of the Monastery, or his representative, nor shall the vote given by each Sister severally ever be divulged or made known, as stated above.

On the morning of the Election Day, they shall sing the Mass of the Holy Ghost, if the Rubrics permit.

The Bishop, attended by two or more grave Priests, shall assist at a table set without the Grate of the Sisters—the Prioress, with another Sister whom the Council shall appoint, shall, if the Community so wish, be up at the same Grate, but within, to witness the counting of the votes, etc.

At the sound of the bell, the Sisters, who shall be entitled to take part in the Election, shall come together. The Grace of the Holy Ghost shall be invoked by the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, &c., with the Prayer, *Deus qui corda*, &c. Then they shall all say the *Confiteor*, and the Bishop, or his representative, shall absolve them.

For the greater secrecy of voting, each Sister shall receive a Form or Table, on which in their order are clearly written or printed the names of the Sisters eligible for the Office of Abbess—to each a single line being allotted with a marginal space, sufficient for the forming of a cross opposite to the name.

Now beginning with the senior in Profession, and so in their order, each Sister in the fear of God shall set a cross against the name of her whom she chooses to be her Abbess.

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And she is at liberty to elect anyone whomsoever (herself only excepted) of those set down in the list before her, and shall seek to be guided in doing so by the Spirit of God alone.

Nor may any other mark whatsoever be put on the Table except a cross.

Each Sister having marked her Table before the next succeeding one rises from her place to do likewise, approaches the Grate, having in her hand her Table folded in four, so as to be undistinguishable from others, and having made a genuflection, drops it into an urn or closed box, having an opening for that purpose perforated in its cover : then she shall genuflect again and return to her place.

This box or urn shall stand on the table before the Bishop, but visible to the Nuns and within easy reach from their side of the Grate.

Then if there be need, the Bishop shall depute two of the Sisters to attend one of his Assistants to the Infirmary, to seek the votes of such sick Sisters as may be there. On their return one of the two Sisters so deputed shall drop the Table or Tables into the voting urn or box, as has been done with the others.

The votes having been given in full view of the Community, the urn or box shall be opened by the Bishop and his Assistants, and the Tables, still folded, counted. The number being verified, they shall be opened one by one, the Bishop showing them to both of his two Assistants, one of whom, acting as Secretary, notes the number of votes received against the names of Sisters eligible, in a list that has been prepared for the purpose.

For an election, it is required that a Sister receives one above the moiety of the votes given, but if she has been Abbess in the term immediately before, for a re-election two-thirds of the votes are required.

The Bishop and his Assistants having satisfied themselves that the voting has been properly carried out, the Priest who is acting as Secretary shall, in a loud and distinct voice, publish the name of the Sister elected. (If at the first voting no Sister is elected, the voting shall be begun over again, and so continued until one is chosen. The Bishop may, if he thinks proper, after a third scrutiny, publish the names of the Sisters who shall have a larger number of votes ; and if, perchance, after several votings no election has taken place, he may appoint whomsoever of those eligible he pleases to be Abbess for the ensuing term of three years.)

The Bishop shall forthwith cause the Abbess now elected to

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come before him and kneel in front of the Grate, the two senior Nuns accompanying her there. He shall then question her, saying:—

“Sister N, N. . . ., your Sisters, here canonically assembled, have elected you to be their Abbess for the term of three years. Do you accept the charge thus laid upon you?”

And she may fittingly make answer:—

“Relying on God’s grace and help, I do very humbly accept such charge.”

Then the Bishop shall answer “*Deo gratias.*” And she, still kneeling before him, he may properly at once confirm the election made, saying:—

“*Ego Episcopus confirmo in Abbatissam hujus Monasterii Sororem. . . . In Nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*”

“I, Bishop, confirm you, Sister N. N. . . . as Abbess of this Monastery. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

The bells shall be rung, and all the Community, Novices, Lay-Sisters and Postulants summoned. The Bishop shall conduct the Abbess to her Stall in the Choir, and when she is seated he shall then return to the Sanctuary to witness the following ceremony.

The two eldest Sisters shall conduct the Abbess to a seat which shall be prepared in the Choir. When she shall be seated, and having the Holy Rule on her lap, the Community, beginning with the eldest Sister, shall approach the Lady Abbess, and kneeling before her, laying her right hand on the said Book shall, say: “In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen. I, Sister promise obedience to you, the Abbess of this Monastery, and to keep the Rule of our Holy Father St. Augustine, and our Holy Mother St. Bridget.”

To whom the Abbess, then taking the Sister’s hands joined together between her hands, shall answer in this wise: “I admit thine obedience, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

And after this shall come the other Sisters in order and do likewise.

Or, to save time, they may simply kneel before her and kiss her ring in token of their due obedience, and when all have done, the Bishop shall rise, and before the lowermost step of the Altar, intone the *Te Deum*, which shall be taken up and sung to the end by the Choir.

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Kyrie eleison. Christi eleison. Kyrie eleison.

THE BISHOP: *Pater noster.*

THE BISHOP: V. *Et ne nos inducas intentionem.*

THE CHOIR: R. *Sed libera nos a malo.*

THE BISHOP: V. *Confirma hoc Deus quod operatus es in nobis.*

THE CHOIR: R. *A templo sancto tuo quod est in Jerusalem.*

THE BISHOP: V. *Domine exaudi orationem meam.*

THE CHOIR: R. *Et clamor meus ad te veniat.*

THE BISHOP: V. *Dominus vobiscum.*

THE CHOIR: R. *Et cum Spiritu tuo.*

Oremus.

*Omnipotens sempiterne Deus miserere huic famulæ Tuæ
et dirige eam secundum tuam clementiam in viam salutis æternæ: ut
Te donante, tibi placita cupiat, et tota virtute perficiat.*

Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

At the conclusion of this ceremony, the newly elected Abbess shall then take possession of all the keys and of all the other things belonging to her Office, but yet not without witnesses, that it may be understood in what manner and estate they are delivered to her.

The Ordinary or the Superior, according to the Apostolic sanction or institution, must confirm her as aforesaid—thus lawfully and canonically elected, without any more examination or discussion, by his Letters Patent or Commission, according as it is contained in their Regular Institutions and Apostolical sanctions or decrees.

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE NOVICE MISTRESS.

To the Office of the Abbess it belongeth to admit the Novices to the year of probation, and then to give them into the care of a virtuous and prudent Mistress to be instructed. To whom the said Novices, in place of the Abbess, shall be obedient, and show reverence in all things.

To the care of the same Mistress it belongeth not only to try and prove the said Novices in the time of their probation, and to instruct them in the observances of the Order, but also to implant in them the grounds of true religion and mortification, and, finally, to give an account to the Abbess as well of their abilities and proceeding in religion as of their deficiencies and general impediments.

No applicants shall be received except those of good name and fame, and that be born in lawful wedlock.

THE FORM OF RECEIVING POSTULANTS.

If anyone shall intreat to be received into this Order, after the preliminary enquiries have been made as to respectability, suitability, age, health, etc., the Abbess shall propose her to the Council, and if the majority of the members of the Council consent unto her, and the permission of the Bishop be granted her to enter the enclosure, then she shall be received.

She shall remain one year before she receives the Habit. At the end of the third, sixth, and ninth months during that time the Novice Mistress shall give a faithful report of the progress of the Postulant to the Abbess and the members of the Council. (This and what follows shall also apply to Novices.)

On the first Chapter Day, after the completion of the tenth month from her entrance, she shall come to Chapter.

When the Abbess giveth a sign, the Postulant shall be brought in by the Novice Mistress. She shall prostrate before the Abbess until she be bidden to rise, when she shall kneel and acknowledge her faults, which done she shall ask the votes of the Community in the following form:—

“In honour of the Five Wounds of Our Saviour, of Our Blessed Lady, of our Holy Mother St. Bridget, of our Holy Virgin Mother St. Catherine, of our Holy Father St. Augustine, and of my Patron Saint N. . . . , I humbly ask your's, dear Mother, and all this Community's votes for the Holy Habit of this Order” (or “for my Profession.”)

The Lady Abbess shall then examine her, if she desires this solely for the love of God; and she shall tell her of the austerities

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and hardness of the religious life, that is to say, contempt of the world, forgetting of father and mother and all worldly friendship as far as the Rule and the Church determineth, much fasting, early risings, long Services in Choir, daily labour, strict silence, lowest place, hard corrections of Superiors, prompt obedience, giving up of her own will, patience in adversities, and many other such things, which may lightly be suffered a while, but to continue therein for the term of life is very hard for some.

The Postulant shall then depart from the Chapter.

Either then, or at the time appointed by the Abbess, the voting shall begin in this form. The Community having assembled in the Chapter House, the *Veni Creator* shall be sung and the usual prayers recited. If there be any relatives among the Professed Nuns, they shall depart from the Chapter House whilst the qualities of the aspirant shall be discussed. (This fact shall be specially noted down in the verbal process, stating distinctly the names and relationship of those who left the Chapter.)

The Novice Mistress shall give a true and faithful account of the Postulant's (or Novice's) dispositions, enumerating her good qualities as well as her defects, and the endeavours she has taken to overcome herself when corrected for her faults. It is the duty of the Novice Mistress to answer any questions put to her by the members present in reference to the Postulant's (or Novice's) character. When the Novice Mistress has concluded her report she shall leave the room.

The Sisters, beginning at the youngest and ascending to the Abbess, shall each in her turn freely give her opinion, and state what she considers to be for or against the Postulant (or Novice).

Which done, the Abbess shall, beginning with the youngest, ask each Sister if there be anything else she would like to say, and this shall be done in case anything brought forward by others shall have thrown fresh light on what had been before said.

That the Sisters may the more freely give their candid opinions, all they shall say shall be considered as one of the Chapter secrets.

After the Postulant's (or Novice's) dispositions have been maturely discussed, the Novice Mistress and relations, if any, shall be summoned to take part in the voting. On these occasions the votes shall be always secret, that is to say, each one shall place her vote in the urn or box without anyone present knowing whether it be for or against the Postulant (or Novice). The youngest Professed Nun counts the votes in the presence of all, stating so many affirmative and so many negative, or all unanimous. If a moiety of the ballot

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shall be favourable or unfavourable, the Postulant's (or Novice's) petition shall be either admitted or rejected ; or unanimously accepted or rejected, as the votes recorded shall be all for or against her.

The result of the voting shall then be entered in the Register, and immediately subjoined to this statement, each member present shall sign her name, adding after it the position held by her in the Community.

If the Postulant (or Novice) be accepted, the *Te Deum* shall be said, and in the meanwhile the Novice Mistress shall summon the Postulant (or Novice), and at the conclusion of the Hymn of Thanksgiving the Community shall offer her their congratulations.

If the Postulant (or Novice) is rejected she shall not be brought into the Chapter House, nor shall the *Te Deum* be said.

She shall not receive the Habit, nor be admitted to the Profession, until the Bishop, or one deputed by him, shall have examined her vocation, and is satisfied that it is real, and that she wishes to be Clothed, or Professed, of her own free will and without restraint, as the aforesaid Council doth teach in the 23rd Session and 17th Chapter.

THE CLOSING OF THE YEAR OF NOVICESHIP.

When all that Holy Church ordaineth for the receiving of Novices to their Religious Profession has been duly observed, so that the consecration of one or more maidens be appointed for the morrow, the Abbess and Convent shall be gathered in the Chapter House at a convenient time, and they that seek to be Professed, kneeling before her, the Abbess shall say to them, be there many or but one, thus : "What ask ye?" The first of them answering, saying in this wise, "I ask in the way of charity that I may be received to live with you in this holy congregation all the days of my life." And if there be more than one, each of them shall say in her turn thus :

"And I ask the same for mine own part."

And here the Abbess, if need be, may relearn compendiously what hath been said to them from the beginning of their year's Noviciate, concerning the hard things of religion, which are chiefly the contemning of the world, the forgetting of father and mother and all worldly friendship, save as the Rule alloweth and the Church determineth, much fasting, many water days, night watching, early rising, long Church services, daily labour, strict silence, the taking the lowest place, the submitting to hard commands, ready obedience to Superiors, forsaking of one's own will, patience in adversity, the bearing of sharp corrections, and many other like things, which may indeed be easily suffered for a time, but the continuing in which for a lifetime is verily a hard and grievous task.

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Concluding thus :—" Daughters, we declare you who were duly admitted to your year's Noviciate to have been sufficiently proved in the same, and we hold you each fully content therewith."

Then the first of the Novices shall answer, reading from the scroll she has written, and holds in her hand :—

" In Nomine Patris et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen."

" I, N. N., moved and stirred, I hope, by God, perpetually to serve Him in holy religion, and especially in this Order of Our Most Holy Saviour, after manifold desires and prayers to your right, devout, and honourable ladyship, and to the great abundant charity of all the ladies your Sisters, acknowledge myself indebted to your great charity to have been duly admitted to my year's Noviciate, such a day, such a month, and such a year of our Lord in the —th year of mine age, and to have been sufficiently proved in the same after the Rule of Our Most Holy Saviour and Statutes of this Monastery, which year now terminated, if it please you to do the same, I accept for sufficient probation.

" Also, Reverend Lady, I, purposing to be a child of obedience, promise faithfully to obey and observe the said Rule, with such authentic declaration, and interpretation of the same, or of any part thereof, and such additions, privileges, ordinary injunctions, local statutes and other ordinances, wittingly admitted and reasonably approved, by the common consent of the Sisters professed before me, and this for as long as I live and to the best of my power.

" In witness of all and each of the said promises I have set my sign manual to this present writing." (Which sign may be made beforehand for saving of time.)

After this the Abbess shall say thus, as well to one as to all :—

" Almighty God, Who Inspired our Holy Rule, confirm you in this holy purpose. And I, in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His Most Holy Mother, Our Lady Saint Mary, and Our Holy Mother St. Bridget, in the name likewise of the whole congregation of Sisters, and in my own name, close your said year's Noviciate, and consent to receive you to be Professed in this Monastery on the morrow of this day, provided no lawful cause intervene in the meanwhile."

To the which words all the Convent shall incline in token that they, too, give consent to the same. Yet no Sister shall presume to speak there without special licence of the Abbess. And if there be

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more Novices than one to be received, each one in her turn shall read as above from her scroll, and separately be admitted by the Abbess.

This done one of them shall say:—

“I yield thanks to God and to His Blessed Mother Mary, ever a Virgin, to our Holy Mother St. Bridget, and to your Right Reverend Ladyship, and to the whole congregation of this Monastery, and I meekly accept this grace shown by you to me.”

And if there be more than one, each shall say, “I do the same for mine own part.” After which they shall kiss their scroll, and one after the other, with their own hands, deliver it into the hands of the Abbess.

THE CUTTING OF THE HAIR BEFORE PROFESSION.

Furthermore, before any Novices be presented to the Bishop to be consecrated, their hair shall be clipped by the Abbess, after the manner of other Nuns, under this form.

The Sacristan shall provide Holy Water, a cloth and a pair of scissors. The Novices, with hair loosely hanging down, shall kneel before the Abbess, who shall sprinkle Holy Water upon their heads, saying (whether for one or many):—“*Aqua benedicta sit vobis salus et vita. In Nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti.*” The Convent shall answer “*Amen.*” And then the Abbess shall say:—“Almighty God, to Whom you shall now be espoused, moisten your souls with the dew of His Holy Spirit and mark you with the token of His sweet, burning love.” The Convent shall answer “*Amen.*” And the Abbess shall proceed to clip the Novice’s hair, the Convent in the meanwhile saying, side for side, this hymn, “*Veni Creator Spiritus,*” distinctly, which ended, and the hair all clipped, the Abbess and Convent shall say this *preces* following:—

The Abbess: “*Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur.*”

The Convent: “*Et renovabis faciem terræ.*”

The Abbess: “*Salvam fac ancillam (ancillas) tuam (tuas).*”

The Convent: “*Deus meus sperantem (sperantes) in te.*”

The Abbess: “*Domine exaudi orationem meam.*”

The Convent: “*Et clamor meus ad te veniat.*”

The Abbess: *Oremus.*

Deus qui corda fidelium, Sancti Spiritus illustratione docuisti da nobis in eodem Spiritu recta sapere et de ejus semper consolatione gaudere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

THE ABBESS: “*Benedicite.*”

THE CONVENT: “*Dominus.*”

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CHAPTER XXXVII.

OF THE OBSERVANCES ABOUT AND ON THE DAY OF PROFESSION.

On the day of Profession all the Hours shall be done before High Mass. The High Altar shall be arrayed as for a great feast, except the relics, and the bells shall be tolled to High Mass two *Miserere* whiles.

A little before the ceremony of Profession shall begin, four Sisters assigned by the Abbess shall religiously, and wearing their whole Habit, bring out a bier, having a cross of wood or one of any other material laid thereon, and they shall carry it a little raised from the earth, two going before and two behind, and shall set it down before the place to be occupied by the Sister to be Professed, and genuflecting towards the High Altar, they shall again turn into the Monastery and the door shall be shut after them. After Mass, the same Sisters that carried the bier out before Mass, shall bring it in again by the same way and in the same form.

After the Mass be ended, and when the *Veni Creator* is begun, the Abbess shall see that the enclosure door be opened to the Bishop against he shall come to the same door, and she, standing there, with all the Convent, procession-wise, the eldest next the door, and when the Bishop has committed the newly Professed to the care of the Lady Abbess, and the door is shut, the Chantress shall begin this Hymn, *Sponsæ Jungendo Filio*, and then all shall go to the Chapter House procession-wise, the youngest before, and the Abbess after, with the newly Professed following her, the Chantress assigning her where she shall kneel before the Abbess in the middle of the Chapter. And the said Hymn, with the Response, "*Regnum mundi*," and Anthem, "*O Jucundissimam*," ended, the Abbess, turning to the Majesty, with all the Convent, shall say these *preces* following in a soft voice, with note:—

V. *Salvam fac, Domine, ancillam tuam.*

R. *Deus meus sperantem in te.*

V. *Mitte ei, Domine, auxilium de sancto.*

R. *Et de Sion tuere eam.*

V. *Domine, exaudi orationem meam.*

R. *Et clamor meus ad te veniat.*

Oremus.

“Deus, qui famulam tuam a seculi vanitate conversam ad superna vocationis accendis amorem, pectori illius purificando illabere, et gratiam qua in te perceiveret infunde, ut protectionis tue munita præsidio quod te donante promisit te juvante implere valeat, et sucæ promissionis executrix

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effecta ad ea que perseverantibus in te dignatus es promittere pertingere mereatur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen."

This done, and the newly Professed and the Abbess having signed the scroll from which she read her vows, and all the Convent being seated the Abbess may say to her what she will, or the following :—

“ Remember now, my dear Sister and my beloved Daughter, what you have taken upon you, and see that as you have changed your secular Habit, so now you alter any practices and customs of yours which are less pleasing to God, into pious exercises of spiritual virtue. Throw off the ancient garment of sin and of idleness, the mother of all vice, and clothe yourself with the sacred vesture of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to Whom you are now espoused, and principally labour to attain to the beginning of the Rule of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that is to true humility, to spotless chastity and to voluntary poverty, as by the Grace of God it shall be taught you. Know now that the Holy Rule ordains that for these eight days you be not obliged to any strictness of the Order, but that you sit the lowest in the Choir, which I desire you do with all submission; that you sit likewise lowest in the Refectory, that you keep strict silence with all, except with myself and with your Mistress, under whose jurisdiction I have placed you, unless indeed I give you a particular licence to speak. This law is ordained to be kept amongst us, that you may better learn your regular observances, unto which you shall be strictly obliged after the eighth day of your Profession.

“ And now I earnestly beseech Our Lord to make you, my dear Sister, a true disciple of Jesus Christ, humble, meek, patient and obedient: that so you may feel the sweetness of Religion and be conformable to all good works and pious practices in this holy company. Amen.”

Good Sisters say all, “ Amen.”

The Chantress shall now lead her to the Abbess to take the token of peace, or kiss of charity, and afterwards to the Prioress, then to all the other Sisters, first at one side and then at the other, so that both the givers and receivers of the said token of peace shall lay their hands upon each other's shoulders, a little inclining their heads to each other, but to the Abbess they shall kneel down to the ground. No words are to be spoken there but “ You are welcome,” and “ I thank you.”

THE MAKING OF OBEDIENCE ON THE EIGHTH DAY AFTER PROFESSION.

On the eighth day after a Religious Profession, the Chapter bell shall be rung, and the Chapter held as on Thursdays. After the ringing of the said bell, all the Convent being gathered together in the

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Chapter House, at the command of the Abbess the newly Professed shall be brought in by the Novice Mistress and led before the Abbess, first inclining to her, they shall kneel in the middle of the Chapter Room, to whom the Abbess shall say :—

“ Daughters, you must understand that it is an ancient and laudable custom among us, and also ordained and strictly enjoined by our sometime Diocesan, the Bishops of London, that every Professed Nun, on the eighth day after the day of her Profession, shall make obedience to the Abbess, promising faithfully to obey her in everything according to the Holy Rule, and to keep the Statutes of this place, and all other things, as their predecessors have done before them.

They hearing this, the first of them shall open the register and make her obedience in the following, or any other like manner :—

“ *In Nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*”

“ I, N. N. . . . (of such an age), after the first Profession, such a Sister in number, professed in the Order of St. Saviour, such a day, of such a month, such a year of Our Lord, and such a Profession after the first, by such a Bishop or Suffragan, acknowledge myself to have been duly admitted to the year's Noviciate, and solemnly Professed after the lawful termination of the said year, according to the Rule of Saint Saviour and the Statutes of this Monastery.

“ Wherefore, I promise to thee, Abbess of this Monastery, and to thy successors, to keep obedience according to the Rule of St. Augustine and the Constitutions of St. Bridget.

“ Moreover, I accept, allow, and fully admit the Pope's Letters, or Bulls, which we regard, and more especially that Bull which among us is called ‘ *Bulla Reformatoria*,’ with all other, their authentic writings. I accept also, and admit, the Additions added to the said Rule, and all such privileges, ordinary injunctions, local statutes, laudable customs, decrees, and other ordinances as have been wittingly admitted and reasonably approved by the common consent of the Sisters Professed before me, binding myself freely and not constrained, faithfully to observe all the said promises to the best of my power unto death.

“ In witness whereof I deliver to you, Reverend Mother, this writing written at mine instance, in this common register, and marked with my sign manual the eighth day after the day of my Profession, in the year of Our Lord above said.”

And, her sign made in the said Register, she shall kiss the Book, and with both hands lay it open in the Abbess's lap. To whom the

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Abbess, having that Sister's hands joined together between her own, shall respond : —“ And I admit thine obedience—*In Nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*”

And then that Sister shall fall down to kiss the Abbess's feet, which she shall not allow, but rather put forth her right hand that she may kiss that. If there be more than one newly Professed, each of them shall say as it is written in the Register, and do as the first Sister did, each in turn and alone.

When she has made her obedience, she shall kneel again before the Abbess, who shall say this little exhortation :—

“My dear Daughter, having now duly completed our time of Regular Silence, you have acquired, I hope, since your Profession, more spiritual force and vigour to continue in the true way of the Religious life with greater diligence and alacrity. Therefore, we are now assembled, after the octave of that festival, to impose an end to your silence and to complete that first ceremony, solemnly begun in our Chapter, on the day of your Espousals ; and as I then attempted to speak concerning the foundation of Our Saviour's Rule, namely true Humility, pure Chastity and Voluntary Poverty, I now declare them more at large.

True humility, then, my dear child, is to fear God at all times, and for His sake to subject yourself to the obedience of your Superiors and elders ; not to grumble at things, even though contrary to your liking be commanded you ; to be prompt to acknowledge your faults and imperfections.

Besides, it is a sign of profound humiliiy when you are content with abjection and disesteem ; when you not only declare yourself to be externally more vile and unworthy than all others, but in your heart believe this to be so ; when you presume not to do anything but what our Holy Rule commands, or what the good example of your elders exhorts you to ; to this end, my dear child, that from one you may learn humility, from another patience, from another devotion, from another circumspection and a vigilant restraint of your tongue ; and, in conclusion, from another a suppression and keeping under of yourself, of your own likings and fancies.

Believe me, my dear child, that these counsels and admonitions are more profitable to your soul than all the learning and wisdom of Solomon ; and in imitating such, I trust in Jesus Christ that by the good example of the Community animating you, all may in due time be found in you.

It is always a great sign of true humility not to give an opinion until you are asked, nor upon the slightest occasion to be moved to

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laughter, but to be modest in your speech with few words, and these rational. And lastly, let your humility shine forth in your conversation and deportment, and strive to represent yourself in all places as present before the judgment seat of God, saying with the Publican : " I am not worthy to lift up mine eyes to heaven." For the lustre of true and sincere humility must of necessity shine and show itself clearly in all your words and actions. So much for humility, and now to your three essential Vows.

Pure Chastity, dear Sister, you must know doth not consist only in body but in mind too.

True Poverty, dear child, standeth in forsaking all worldly things for Almighty God's sake only ; yes, even the desire of having even with leave more than necessity requireth. For it is adjudged as a property what temporal things soever you possess without your Abbess's leave ; and either to receive, or retain, being received, or to change or give away, whether great or little, is deemed the same if done without leave.

Now these things are called necessary, which you cannot religiously and well be without. Let everyone then, and you especially, good Sister, avoid having what, according to our Holy Rule, you may religiously and well be without, for those things you ought neither to have, desire, procure, or admit of ; and then you will truly merit to be partakers of Heavenly treasures. This is promised by Truth Himself, Who saith : " Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Lastly now, my dear Sister, Regular Obedience, which in every Religious Order is made the first principle, and as it were the corner stone of the Spiritual building ; whence it is that it is not limited to this or that Order, as the Humility, Chastity, Poverty we speak of are ; but it doth so diffuse and extend itself over all Rules and Constitutions, it is impossible to comprise it in the narrowness of this our discourse.

Notwithstanding, even in our own Holy Rule, it is very fitly reduced to two general heads ; to wit, Obedience in doing, and Obedience in speaking. Let, therefore, all your actions be done according to the Holy Rule and the commands of your lawful Superiors. And concerning your words and discourses, there is no less general constitution ; that in spiritual things and such as are really necessary licence is granted to speak, but scurrilous and idle words are absolutely to be avoided at all times.

If peradventure these or the like obligations may appear difficult and hard to you, remember, I beseech you, my dear daughter, that your Sacred Spouse, Our Lord Jesus Christ, became obedient to His

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Heavenly Father, even to torments and death itself, yea, the very death of the Cross.

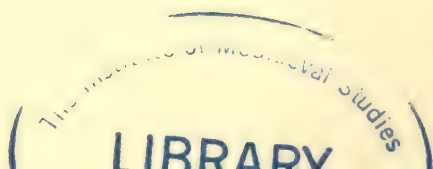
Ponder then seriously within yourself whom you are to imitate and follow, and earnestly endeavour to comply worthily and devoutly with this your sacred Vocation.

Now, my dear child, being admitted to see and to hear the secrets of our Chapter, you are to know that a Chapter is called a house of Confession and Council, wherein transgressions are proclaimed and corrected like as the trespass asketh; where profitable and weighty matters are agitated, and our domestic affairs when occasion requires are regulated and determined amongst us. Have you wariness, therefore, that you disclose by no means whatever any of the secrets of the Chapter, or of those things that are spoken of in it, to any Secular or Regular person whatsoever, but only to your professed Sisters, and not even to them or to such as shall afterwards be admitted to the Chapter, if they touch the good name or fame of anyone in particular, or give the least evil hint or suspicion; for if you be found guilty in this point, besides the penance imposed upon the disobedient, you shall be excluded from the Chapter till such time as I think you worthy to be admitted again.

Associate, therefore, and unite yourself for the future with your companions, that together with them you labour vigilantly in the Vineyard of the Lord. Amen."

After this the Abbess shall assign her to her Mistress after the form expressed in Chapter XXXVI. of this book, and then the Chantress at the bidding of the Abbess shall set her in her order in the Chapter, Choir, and other places after the precept of the Rule. Nevertheless, the Abbess shall not always be bound to say the said exhortation, but after her discretion and disposition, and the time giveth and the matter requireth.

At the end of the Noviciate, the Novice Mistress shall be relieved of her charge in full Chapter.



HERE FOLLOWETH THE RULE OF OUR SAVIOUR.

CHAPTER I.

OF HUMILITY, CHASTITY AND POVERTY.

The beginning, therefore, of this salutary religion and this Rule, is very meekness, pure chastity, and voluntary poverty. Therefore be it lawful to none to have anything of their own, no manner of thing be it never so little, nor to have one halfpenny, or possess or to touch it with the hands, nor to have any thing of gold or silver, but if haply be need to touch gold or silver for embroidery work, and yet not that without counsel and license of the Abbess. All necessaries are to hoped of the Abbess, that is to say, regular clothing, bedding, instruments of work ; neither ought they to have anything that the Rule suffereth not.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE BEDDING.

It is to be known that their regular bedding ought to be of straw, and upon the straw they must have two blankets of burrel, without linen sheets or flock or feather bed, and under their head they shall have a cushion covered with linen cloth, and a bolster covered with linen cloth also.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE SISTERS' CLOTHING.

The clothing of the Sisters must be two stamens of white burrel, one for daily use, another for washing ; one habit of grey burrel and one cowl, whose sleeves shall be no longer than the end of the middle finger ; when they shall exercise any manner of service the folds of the sleeves hanging down about the hands shall be strained together moderately to the arms with a button, to the likeness of other sleeves, one mantle that shall also be of grey burrel like the habit and cowl, which mantle shall not be on the outside gathered nor pleated, nor curiously made, but straight and plain, all for usefulness, and nothing for vanity, which mantle ought to be single in summer and furred in winter, not with delicate skin, but with lamb or sheep-skin. Of such skin may be had also a pelisse in winter. And the mantle shall not touch the ground by a span, and it must be bound together at the neck with a wooden button.

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As to the hose and shoes of their feet, in summer they must have shoes reaching to the ankles, and hose to the knees, and in winter high shoes to the knees, furred with burrel, and hose as high. The arrangement of the head shall be a wimple, with which the forehead and cheeks must be enwrapped, and part of the face covered, whose extremities shall be joined together with a pin or tape behind the head. Upon this wimple must be put a veil of black cloth, which must be set together that it fly not abroad, one pin on the forehead, the other two about the ears. Furthermore, upon the veil must be set a crown of white linen cloth, to which must be sewed five small particles of red cloth, as five drops, the first particle on the forehead, another behind, the third and fourth about the ears, and the fifth in the middle of the head, in the manner of a cross; this crown shall be made fast in the middle of the head with one pin, and this crown shall both widows and virgins wear in token of continence and chastity.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DIVINE OFFICE OF THE SISTERS.

OF THE HOURS OF DIVINE SERVICES.

The Sisters every day, in reverence of the Blessed Virgin Mary, shall sing solemnly her Hours with three Lessons, both on Festival and Ferial days. Every day when the sign is made to Evensong, the Sisters must come together, and first the right Choir must say an "*Ave Maria*," and inclining themselves profoundly to the other Choir must say:—

"Forgive us, for the love of God and of His most piteous Mother Mary, if we have offended you in word or deed, by sign or token, for likewise if there be any default in you against us, we forgive it gladly."

And the other Choir, likewise inclining, saying the same, and asking forgiveness, then let them go to Evensong.

At the end of every Hour they shall sing the Antiphon, "*Ave Maria*," with a Collect, in this manner:—

"Almighty, Everlasting God, Who for us didst vouchsafe to be born of the most chaste Virgin, make us, we beseech Thee, to serve Thee with a chaste body, and to please Thee with a humble heart.

"We pray Thee also, most piteous Virgin Mary, Queen of this world and of Angels, that Thou mayest obtain refreshment for them whom the fire of Purgatory doth chasten, and for sinners forgiveness, and for the just perseverance in goodness, and defend us from those present perils that beset us. Through Christ Our Lord."

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All days forth, Festival and Ferial, Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary shall be sung by the Sisters, and every Saturday the Sisters after the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary shall sing the *Salve Regina*.

CHAPTER V.

ON SILENCE.

To keep the gravity of silence, be it lawful to none to speak anything from the beginning of the day until after the Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but in case of necessity and by licence of the Abbess. That Mass ended, in due places between the Hours, until blessing of the table be read, licence is given to speak for spiritual conference, and of the observance of the Order, and of such things as real need requires, but frivolities, vain and idle words, must in any time and in any place be fled. After Grace is said in the Church, the Sisters may speak among themselves till Evensong begin. Then also silence is diligently to be kept till they have read Grace after supper in the Church. In that little space that is between Grace and Collation, licence to speak is granted. Collation begun with all diligence, silence must be kept till the sung Mass of the Blessed Virgin Mary of the day following be ended; be it known that all the Sisters must be constrained to the aforesaid silence except those who have such offices as cannot be conveniently executed and performed without speech, for all things must be done reasonably, that all occasion be removed from the evilly disposed.

CHAPTER VI.

THAT IT IS LAWFUL TO NONE TO ENTER THE MONASTERY.

All occasion removed of any matter of necessity or supplication whatsoever, no secular man or woman, or any religious or other Clerk, shall enter the cloister of the Monastery of Nuns, and speech of all is forbidden, save at certain times.

CHAPTER VII.

ON WHAT DAYS AND IN WHAT MANNER IT IS PERMITTED TO THE SISTERS TO SPEAK TO SECULAR PERSONS AT THE GRATE.

These times may the Nuns speak to seculars, that is, from the ninth hour till Evensong, and this only on Sundays and great Feasts of Saints, but not going out to them, but only sitting at the windows appointed; for it shall be lawful to none after they enter to go out of the enclosure of the Monastery, if in case any desire to be seen of their father, mother, or honest dear friends, they may open the window by leave of the Abbess, but if they open not the window a more plenteous reward is promised them in times to come.

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CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE FASTS OF THE SISTERS.

In Advent all shall fast with Lenten meats till the day of the Nativity, and the Friday next before Quinquagesima Sunday they shall all begin to fast with Lent meats until Easter Day; and the first Friday after the Ascension of Our Lord till Pentecost they shall fast with fish and white meats; they shall fast likewise with fish and white meats from the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross unto the Feast of St. Michael; also from the Feast of All Hallows till Advent they shall fast with fish and white meats. These days they shall fast with bread and water—that is to say, before the four solemnities of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Purification, Annunciation, Assumption, and Nativity; on the Vigil of all Apostles, except when two Apostles be joined in one solemnity, as SS. Peter and Paul, Philip and James, Simon and Jude, then one fast shall stand for both.

Also on the Feast of St. John before the Latin Gate, St. John Baptist, St. Michael Arch., All Saints, Good Friday, and the Eve of Corpus Christi; these days all shall fast with bread and water, with this caution, that the sick and aged are to be excepted in all fasts, and indulgence is to be used towards those who are known to be too weak to perform their offices when they fast. Other times all the year they may eat flesh four times in the week, that is to say, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and at supper on these days they may eat flesh and white meats. On Wednesday they shall abstain from flesh as well at dinner as at supper, yet it shall be lawful to eat on that day fish and white meats; on Fridays of the whole year they shall fast with Lent meats, and Saturdays they shall fast with white meats and fish; and all other fasting days they shall fast after the statutes of the Church.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MANNER OF RECEIVING SISTERS.

If any pray to be taken to this Religion, she shall not be received before a whole year, and it must be said to her the first time:—“Return again to us after three months, and in the meantime we shall have deliberation of thee.” When she cometh again at the time set the Abbess must inquire of her with what desire she asketh this Religion, and with what bonds she is holden in the world, and her cause and purpose heard, it must be said to her:—“Daughter, under likeness of good is hidden sometimes the snare of falseness, and want of consideration of the time to come deceiveth many, therefore,

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return to us after some months, and show us thy desire if it persevere in good." Therefore, she returning again and humbling herself as at first, the hardness and sharpness of the Order, contempt of the world, and forgetting of father and mother must be shewed her; which all, if she promise to keep, about the end of the year, all the congregation shall consent unto her; which if she be such a person that of her life there is no doubt, in the same beginning of her petition all may consent to her. But before a year she ought not in anywise to be admitted to enter it.* And then in the end of the year when she is received both parties must forsake the year of proof that is wont. Wherefore licence obtained to enter, when the Bishop of the Diocese cometh, or any other Bishop with his licence or licence of another who hath the ordinary jurisdiction in that Diocese, he shall go to the Church door and ask the person that is to enter religion:—"Art thou free from all bonds of the Church, that is to say, wedlock, vow and excommunication?" She shall answer: "Yea, verily, I am free." Then the Bishop shall say:—"Is it peradventure, shame or grief or any other worldly adversity that forces thee to enter religion; or is it peradventure the greatness of thy unpaid debts that impels thee?" And if she shall answer:—"Neither sorrow nor shame incites me hereunto, but the fervent love of Christ, and according to my ability I have paid all my debts." Then the Bishop shall say:—"Dost thou ask to enter into this religion in the name of Jesus Christ and in honour of His most Holy Mother, the Virgin Mary?" And if she shall answer:—"Yea, I do desire it," then the Bishop shall lead her into the Church, saying:—"Behold, she now enters worthily into this religion." And when she enters the Church, there must be carried before her a red banner, on which on one side is to be painted the image of the Body of Christ suffering on the Cross, and on the other side the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary, that the new spouse beholding the sign of her new Spouse suffering on the Cross, she may learn patience and poverty, and beholding the Virgin Mother she may learn Chastity and Humility.

She being thus brought into the Church, she shall be set at the Church door, and the Bishop a little way from her on one side shall consecrate the ring; then shall be lighted two torches that shall be carried before the banner, and they shall burn till mass be ended, and then the Bishop shall say this prayer:—

"Omnipotent, sempiternal God, Who hath espoused to Thee

* Note: With regard to the year of probation, the provision of the Council of Trent is as follows:—In no Order, whether in Convents of men or women, can any be admitted to Profession until they have undergone a year's probation after their clothing. Sess. xxv. Chap. 15.

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a new spouse, in Thy mercy and pity, bless this ring, that as Thy servant outwardly bears the sign of a new spouse on her hand, so she may deserve inwardly to possess Thy Faith and Charity. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen."

When the ring shall be blessed, the Bishop shall draw nigh to the servant of God and shall say:—

"Thou must promise to God and me in His behalf, that thou wilt obey thy prelates, and keep this Rule to the best of Thy power to the end of thy life."

When she has promised to perform all this, the Bishop must say:—

"With such intention thou must plight thy troth to thy God, and vow never to love anything as thy God, and with thy desire it behoveth thee to give thyself to Him."

Then she shall answer :

"I give myself to my God with my whole heart and my whole mind, offering myself to Him in all simplicity of heart."

To whom the Bishop shall make answer:—

"And I, on the part of Almighty God, and His only Begotten Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, do accept thee." And then let him say this orison:—

"May Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, who vouchsafed to descend into the womb of a virgin, be established in thy soul, and mayest thou be in Him. In the Name of the Father, etc."

Then he shall set the ring on the finger of the right hand, saying:—

"I bless thee as a spouse of Christ, and His perpetual possession. In the name of the Father. Amen."

This done, the Bishop shall go to the Altar, and begin Mass of the Blessed Trinity, which shall be sung, and the servant of God in the meantime shall stand below, hard by the Choir, and when the Offertory beginneth, she shall come up to the Altar and make her offering, which done she shall go down again to her place; the Offertory ended, her Habit which the Rule commands to be made ready before by the Convent, shall be brought to the Altar before the Bishop, which he shall bless, reading this orison:—

"O Lord Jesus Christ, Who willest not the death of sinners, but desirest penance, we beseech Thy clemency that Thou vouchsafe to bless this Habit, which this Thy servant proposes to wear in token of humility and penance, that leaving the vanity of this

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world, she may deserve to be clothed by Thee with true humility. In the name of the Father, etc."

The Habit hallowed, one of the clerks shall call the servant of God to the Altar before the Bishop, who going forth barefooted, and putting off her outward garment, before the Altar, shall abide in her robe to take the Hallowed Habit; then shall she be clothed by the Bishop with the regular Habit, the Bishop saying :—

"Almighty God give thee true penance in thy conscience and perfect contrition in thy heart. In the Name of the Father, etc."

Then she shall array her feet with shoes, the Bishop saying :—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ make a right going to thy feet and grant thee so to walk in the way of salvation, that thou never more consent to sin, and give thee true amendment of thy sins committed, and wariness for the time to come. In the Name of the Father, etc."

And when the Cowl is put on, the Bishop must say :—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, Hope of all Christians, grant thee hope and trust in thy heart, that thou hope so of the mercy of God, that thou forget not His Justice, and that thou so dread His severity, that thou forget not His pity and goodness. In the Name of the Father, etc."

Then the Mantle put on, the Bishop shall say :—

"Lord God Omnipotent, Beginning of true faith strengthen and confirm thy soul in true faith, and grant thee to believe what belongs to Faith, and persevere to the end of thy life in the good thou hast begun. In the Name of the Father, etc."

Then after that shall the Mantle be joined with a wooden button, the Bishop shall say :—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ, who for passing great charity wherewith He loved us, was nailed to the tree of the Cross and condemned to a most bitter death, transfix and pierce thy soul with the memory of His Passion, so that thy charity may burn to God alone, and the fire of Godly Charity embracing thee, may give thee rest in His blessed Arms, in which all holy Saints rest. In the Name of the Father, etc."

After this, she shall cover her head with the Wimple, the Bishop putting in the pin, and saying :—

"Our Lord Jesus Christ be a refreshing shelter from heat to thy soul, that no hurtful thing be able to harm it. In the Name of the Father, etc."

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Then putting on the Veil, let the Bishop say :—

“May our Lord Jesus Christ grant gladly light and wisdom to thy understanding so that all earthly things, and the things that be hurtful to thy soul be dead before thy eyes, and the way that leadeth to heavenly things may be illuminated before thy soul, so that thou mayest know Him Who hath chosen thee. In the Name of the Father, etc.”

These things ended, the servant of God must turn again to the place where she stood before, and the Bishop shall proceed with His Mass, which when he cometh at that part of the Mass, as the priest in Nuptial Mass is wont to turn him and bless the husband and wife, the same Bishop himself shall turn him and one of the clerks calling the servant of God to the Altar, he shall put on the Crown upon her veil, saying :—

“Our Lord Jesus Christ stablish His sign in thee, that I put on thy head and direct thy will in all the things thou hast now vowed, so that thou be stable and persevering, and grant thee to be crowned with a crown of joy after His own benign Will, so that thy soul be joined inseparably to Him that is one God in Three Persons. In the Name of the Father, etc.”

Then after that he shall pin the Crown, saying :—

“Jesus Christ pierce thy heart and thy soul with his love, so that it dread no besettings of temptation. In the Name of the Father, etc.”

These things ended, the servant of God shall turn again to her first place unto the end of Mass, which ended, one of the clerks shall call her to the Altar saying :—

“Pass forth Spouse of Christ unto the Altar of Christ.”

She therefore going forth shall make her veyne upon her face, and then the Bishop kneeling with his clerks must read the Litany, praying all Saints for the servant of God. And the Litany ended, the Bishop arising shall go to the servant of God prostrate, say upon her the absolution of sins, and so absolution received she rising up shall take the Body of Christ. Which received, four Sisters, the door open by which the servant of God is to enter, must go out swiftly and bring into the Monastery the bier, which, with earth cast upon it, must be set before the door, before the beginning of Mass ; then furthermore the Bishop coming to the said door, the servant of God following after with two torches and the Clerks singing “*Veni Creator Spiritus,*” shall assign her to the Abbess abiding the door with the Convent, the Bishop sayeth to the Abbess these words :—

“Lo here before God and all His Saints, in the face of Holy

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Church, I commend the soul of this Spouse of God into the hands of thy safe-keeping, which if she fall by thy negligence, her Spouse, Jesus Christ shall require her of thee; guard, therefore, and keep the deposit of God, that when reckoning shall be hereafter, thou yield her more holy whom thou hast received holy."

To whom the Abbess must answer:—

"Right Rev. dear Father, this is a great treasure, and a hard labour, and my strength is not sufficient to this; nevertheless, helped by thy prayers and trusting in the help of God, I shall do what thou commandest."

And so the servant of God anon led in, the door must be shut and anon she must be led to the Chapter, and for eight days after she shall be bound to no discipline, but she shall stand lowest in the Choir. Eight days fulfilled she must be bound as others to the observance of the Order, and be set by the last in the Choir and at the Table.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE NUMBER OF THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

The Sisters shall be sixty and no more; who shall have Clerks that each day shall sing Mass of the time and Office, which is had in the Cathedral Churches of those lands in which these Monasteries are. They are to be separated in all cases from the Monastery of the Sisters, having a cloister by themselves in which they shall dwell, and from the cloister they shall have an entrance into the Church, and the lower Choir, but the Choir of the Sisters shall be above under the roof, so that they may see the Sacraments and hear the Office. These Priests shall be thirteen, after the number of the thirteen Apostles, of whom Paul, the thirteenth, suffered not least labour. Furthermore, four Deacons, who may be Priests if they will, and they have the figure of the four principal Doctors, Ambrose, Austin, Gregory and Jerome. Furthermore, eight lay-brothers, who with their labour shall minister necessities to the clerks; accounted therefore sixty Sisters, thirteen Priests, four Deacons and the eight Servitors, so much shall be the number of all persons as was the thirteen Apostles and the seventy and two disciples.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE HABIT OF THE BRETHREN.

All the Priests and Brothers may have two white undertunics of white burrel and one Rule Habit of grey burrel, and the cowl of grey

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burrel, to which must be an hood sewed and upon the Cowl, a Mantle of grey burrel ; they may have also when need is, a fur lining under the Mantle of lamb or sheep's wool. These thirteen Priests for reverence of the Passion of Christ, shall bear on their Mantles on the left side, a red cross of cloth sewed thereto, and in the middle of the cross a little round of white cloth, for the Mystery of the Body of Christ which they offer each day. The four Deacons shall bear on their Mantles a white circle, for the incomprehensible wisdom of the four Doctors, whose figure they bear, in which circle four little red particles in manner of tongues, shall be sewed for the Holy Ghost enflamed them of the excellence of the Godhead, of the Mystery of the Incarnation of Christ, of the vanity and contempt of the world, of the rewards of the just, and of the pains of the wicked. The Lay-Brothers also shall bear in their Mantles a white cross for Innocence, in the which cross must be five red particles for the reverence of the five wounds of Christ. The Priests also and Brothers in the summer must have shoes to the ankles, and stockings; in the winter boots lined with burrel, and stockings.

And it is to be noted that these Brothers ought never to be more in the Monastery than twenty-five, who in the same manner, same place, and with the same blessing are to be received and hallowed as the Sisters, by the Bishop, except that for the ring the Bishop shall take the hand of the Brothers, with the blessing with which the ring is put on to the Sisters', and for the Veil the Bishop must lay his hands on their heads, with the same words with which the Veil was put on the Sisters' heads. For the crown must be made a cross, with the blessing the Crown is set on with, the Brothers must have Tonsure, as in other Monasteries, after Mass the Bishop shall set them in the Cloister of the Brothers, out of which they shall never go but into the Church, save in grievous and inevitable case of need.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE ELECTION OF THE ABBESS AND CONFESSOR GENERAL OF THE MONASTERY.

The Abbess must be chosen of the Convent, and when she is chosen lawfully she must be confirmed by the Bishop, who for the reverence of the most Blessed Virgin Mary to whom this Order is hallowed, must be Head and Lady; for that Virgin whose stead the Abbess holdeth on earth, Christ ascending into Heaven, was Head and Queen of the Apostles and Disciples of Christ. The Abbess may also out of the thirteen Priests, in whom she with all the Congregation of

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Sisters and Brothers consents, must choose to be Confessor of all, and the Bishop must ordain and confirm him General Confessor of the Monastery, to whom authority of binding and absolving, correcting and reforming, fully granted by the Bishop, all the Priests and Brothers in all things must obey, as the Sisters obey the Abbess, and doing naught, not the least thing, against his commandment; the which General Confessor save the government of the Brethren and the care of the Order, without the consent of the Abbess, shall do nothing. Wherefore, as she is Head of the Monastery, of the needs and goods of the Monastery to be ordained, she shall be consulted.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE OFFICE OF PREACHING AND OF THE CONFESSION OF THE BROTHERS AND PRIESTS.

These thirteen Priests ought to attend only to Divine Service, and Study and Prayer, and to entangle themselves with none other needs or offices; they also are bound to expound every Sunday the Gospel of that same day in the Mass, to all hearers in the vulgar tongue and in all Solemnities, whose Vigils or Eves are fasts on bread and water, and on all other Feasts that have Vigils they ought openly to preach.

The consciences also of all the Sisters, Priests and Brethren must be made open by confession to the General Confessor at least thrice in the year, and forasmuch as the consciences of all ought to be purified oftener in the year by Confession, it is lawful to the same Confessor General to choose out of the twelve Priests, as many as he will to hear Confessions, who must be ready every day to satisfy of the Sacrament to each one that will be Confessed.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON WHAT DAYS THE SISTERS SHALL COMMUNICATE.

All Festival days whose Vigils or Eves are fasted in the Monastery on bread and water, and on the Supper of the Lord, Easter Day, Ascension, Pentecost and the Nativity of Our Lord, all shall be communicated and the nuns, to whom God inspireth more devotion, if they ask it with fervent desire, with counsel of their Confessor may be communicated every Saturday. *

CHAPTER XV.

HOW CHAPTER IS TO BE HELD AND THE PENANCE THAT IS TO BE SET TO A NUN HAVING ANYTHING OF HER OWN.

Every fifth Feria the Chapter must be held, where if any have trespassed in anything she must be corrected. A Sister that in sick-

* This has been changed by the recent legislation, by which daily communion is recommended and allowed to all.

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ness is discovered or confesseth to have had anything as her own, must be absolved by her Confessor, but health restored she must suffer and fulfil her penance. She that is whole and is found to have any private property, and proclaimeth not herself, and is convicted of three witnesses, she shall sit on the pavement and have, the first day of the Chapter, that is to say, fifth Feria, the same meat as other Sisters, but on the sixth Feria, bread and water; these two days she shall not enter the Church, abiding in the Ambulatory, the hours in which the Work of God is found, she speaking nought to any Sister; must fall down to the feet of all going out of Church. And Evensong being said on sixth Feria, the Convent going out in their order, the Abbess following the Convent, when she cometh to that nun lying on the pavement, she must lift her up, and giving her the hand, lead her to the Altar in the Sisters' Choir, the Convent following and praying for her, where Absolution received of the Confessor, who is without at the Grate, she shall turn again to her order.

If any die having anything of private property, and have not confessed it, the body of her, washed and laid in the feretory, must be before the door of the Church, and the Abbess shall say, the Convent present and hearing:—"She thus hath sinned grievously against God and the Order by propriety, the devil deceiving her. Pray we therefore for her, that God forgive her this sin, because He is merciful." And "Ave Maria" said of all she shall be absolved of the Confessor. Furthermore, her body be set in the middle of the Sisters' Choir, and about the end of Mass, let her body be borne by the Sisters to the Church door, which opened, the Brothers shall enter and bear forth the body, and it must be buried in due manner.

CHAPTER XVI.

THAT THE NUNS SHALL TAKE NO JEWELS OR GIFTS.

If any gifts or jewels be sent to any by fathers, mothers or friends, they must in no wise be received, for the Vow and holy Profession, nor yet shall the Abbess herself grant any leave of having anything proper, though she be besought thereon of the friends of what dignity soever they be, for as of a spark is gendered fire, so of propriety damnation which denieth the laudable unity in the Monastery, and corrupteth common equity. Therefore, the Abbess must be carefully ware herself, that she delight not in this sin, as using free power, or appear notable in her habit before the others; for the more she is preferred before others, the more diligently she ought to keep the precepts of the Rule.

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CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE CONSTRUCTION AND DOWRY OF THE MONASTERY, AND HOW EACH YEAR EXPENSES OF THE MONASTERY ACCOUNTED, ALL SUPERFLUITY MUST BE GIVEN TO THE POOR.

First must be built the Church and the Monastery of Nuns, and the Cloister of the Priests in their places, as it is above said, and after is the Convent to be brought in there, and if the Founders haply may not perform or make perfect in short time fully all the Monastery and Court, then they must beware that there be never ordained, or set, any Convent, before there be made so many houses and buildings that the Nuns and Monks may dwell there peaceably without tribulation or dread. And no fewer Sisters are to be brought in than that there be sufficient to sing their Office, nor fewer Priests than that there also be strong to sing each day the Office of the time. Then shall they be freely set in the Monastery, and after as many other persons that the number before-named of Sisters and Brothers be fulfilled. Furthermore, after the Monastery be made and endowed by the Founders or Foundresses to the sustenance of the aforesaid number of persons in such wise that as well in barren year as plenteous they have provided sufficient for support of the charges aforesaid. After in no wise may be granted or given to the same Monastery funds, or rents of any other entering the same Monastery or of other persons. For when any person is dead in the same Monastery another must be taken in her place, after the Order aforesaid; but the habit of the person dead, together with her portion of meat and drink every day until another enter in her place, must be given to the poor.

Therefore, before the Feast of All Saints yearly, ought to be accounted and foreknown the livelihood and necessities of the year following after, and all things that remain of food or money of the year then spent on the morrow of All Saints, that is, on the day of the Commemoration of All Souls must be given to the poor; and for that, it behoveth not the Monastery to be overburdened with any hospitality. It is also to be known, that if at any time the provision for the year following seem not to suffice, then of the moneys and provision of the year past spent, must be added to the year following, so much as is need and no more, if the Abbess will flee the peril of her soul; and afterwards, if anything abide, it must be given to the needy. As often as new clothes be taken, the old ones must be given to the poor. The Abbess also must know, that if she make more houses than the very need of them that dwell in the Monastery asketh, or also if she do make stately houses, it shall be accounted to her as a

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grievous sin, as if she had spoiled by violence living and clothing from the poor of Christ. Furthermore, when any man offereth his son or daughter in the Monastery, he shall offer somewhat if it please him to the Monastery, but not in rents or lands, after the Monastery be sufficiently endowed of funds in time of donation of the Monastery first given. But that they appear not void in the sight of God, it is seemly that somewhat be offered, and that offering shall not be constrained, nor prescribed of the Convent, it must be in the will and pleasure of him that offereth that as much as he may or will give, be received with giving of thanks. Persons that be wholly poor must be received freely though they offer naught. And what things be offered they shall in no wise be turned into the profit of the Monastery, but they must be given to the poor, and to Churches that be needy, unless haply the Monastery be then straitened with lawful and inevitable necessity. Furthermore, of whomsoever anything be offered to the Convent, save the oblation of persons, the religious, which ought not to enter void, they shall in no wise be received. If the Convent with lawful and insufferable need be compelled to receive things offered, then it must take heed warily and carefully to inquire if haply the things offered be of ill-gotten goods, and deliberation had, the Abbess must say to the offerer:—"It is commanded to us to receive naught but of certain and well gotten goods; I pray thee come again on such a day, and thy oblation carefully examined, offer it to thy God before witnesses." When he cometh again with witnesses, his offering shall be received; and the Convent shall pray for him and he must be accounted among its benefactors. If it be doubted whether the thing offered be well gotten or evil, others saying so, and others so, they shall not be received be the need never so much that constraineth, nevertheless his will showed to the Convent, all shall pray for him for charity. They that offer anything of fervent desire to the Convent, and the Convent needeth them not, it must be said to them of the Convent:—"We receive thy gifts gladly and gather them to our charity. Nevertheless, we need not these your offerings, we lovingly and humbly pray thee that thou give these things offered in our behalf, and in our name, to the poor, or to Churches of the which we shall say unto you." And if he promise this and do it, his offering shall be heard. That is to say, he shall be partner of the prayers of the Monastery.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF THE NUMBER OF ALTARS AND ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

This also is to be known that Altars shall be thirteen, and every Altar must be content with one Chalice; The High Altar must have

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two Chalices, with two pairs of cruets, and two pairs of candlesticks, and one cross, and three thuribles, of the which one is to be had for ferial days, and two on festival days, and one Pyx for the Body of Christ ; furthermore, it is to be ware in all wise that there be had no more things of silver or of gold in possession of the Monastery, for they shall keep to them for treasure neither silver nor gold, nor precious stones, but the Grace of God, with continual study, devout prayers and divine praises ; it shall be lawful to cover the relics of Saints with gold, or silver, or precious stones, after the measure, without superfluity. Books also are to be had as may be necessary to do Divine Service, and no more in any case. Of books they shall have as many as they wish in which to learn and to study. Furthermore each Altar must be content with two ornaments, and two vestments for festival and ferial, more of all things above written shall never be had together in possession of the Monastery.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF THE AGE OF THOSE THAT SHALL ENTER THIS RELIGION.

None of the Sisters before eighteen years of age may ever be taken to this Religion, nor enter the Monastery before consecration, though all consent to her, before the year ; nor any of the Clerks or Brothers be professed in this Religion before the twenty-fifth year of their age.*

CHAPTER XX.

THAT THE SISTERS SHALL NOT BE IDLE, BUT SHALL WORK
AT ALL TIMES.

The Mother of God divided all her time into three parts, one in which she praised God with her mouth, another in which she served Him with her hands, and the third, having compassion on the infirmity of her body, gave to it refection by measure ; so the Sisters, such time as they be not at Divine Service or reading, they must labour with their hands, that as they serve with the mouth for their Service, so also with their other members, and this labour shall not be for any vanity of the world, nor for their own gain, but as the labour of the Mother of God, for the worship of God and of Churches' profit, and of the poor ; but they must do all their work with license of the Abbess. For neither was Christ Himself, Lord of all, in the world without labour, for when did He labour not in going, teaching and suffering ? Neither were the Apostles without labour, to whom God might have given sufficiently for all things, but yet they with their

* NOTE.—This Chapter supposes, as was the custom of the Order in its beginning, that the time of probation was spent outside the Monastery. The Consecration is identical with the taking of the Vows of Religious. Clothing and Profession were included in one and the same ceremony.

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members served their God, that by bodily labour they might be more able for spiritual labour.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE MEASURE OF FOOD TO BE SET.

The Saints of God did not therefore torment their body for that they hated it, but that they should render it fit for the service of their God for Whom it was made, nor therefore tormented they it, because they believed that by such affliction they were worthy of the Kingdom of God without the Mercy of God, for though a man slay his body a thousand times, yet should he not of his merits be worthy to have the Kingdom of God, if God should proceed against him with His Justice. Therefore this is dear to God and acceptable, that a man so entreat to his body as to a sick beast, as it may stand in the service of God, not that it may be gluttonous or given dissolute unto delicacies, but that he satisfy the need with discretion, and as the weak nature asketh. Wherefore it is hard for all to keep the same measure, therefore that they may have more occasion for good, there must be ordained an even measure to all, to the noble and the peasant, to poor and to rich, the quantity of which measure he can ordain that hath carried our infirmities in himself, by serious experience in ghostly life, for to know, ordain and measure is learned by proof and fulfilled with patience and discretion.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF THE PLACE WHERE THE SISTERS OUGHT TO BE CONFESSED, COMMUNICATED AND SPEAK: OF THE WHEEL OF THE MONASTERY BY WHICH NECESSARIES ARE TO BE TAKEN IN OR OUT.

The Sisters shall make their Confessions at grates, so ordained that they may be heard but not seen, but Communicated they ought to be at windows, where they may be both seen and heard, by which the Body of the Lord may be freely ministered to them. But when they would speak to the Confessor, or any of the Priests or Brothers, for either profit of body or soul, then they must sit at another grate where they may be heard and not seen, near the wall. A wheel must be had, by which necessaries are to be taken in or sent out; nevertheless, none of the Sisters shall presume to speak or leave there anything, or take anything in, or send out without knowledge and license of the Abbess, save that Nun who is deputed to the keeping of the same wheel, who must do her office after the form given to her by the Abbess. Heed also must be taken there and in every such place, save while Confessions are heard at grates ordained, that no Sister hear or speak to any, without the presence of some Sister who must

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hear also all the words, as herself. It must also be forbidden the Confessor or any of the Priests or Brothers to enter the Monastery but when the Sacraments are to be given to the sick, then the Confessor may enter, but in no wise alone, but with some other honest Brethren following him. When any Sister is dead, all the Priests and Brothers with the Confessor must enter, to carry the body to the grave with chant and prayer.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THAT THE BISHOP DIOCESAN MUST BE THE VISITOR OF THIS ORDER.

The Bishop in whose diocese the Monastery is, shall, both to the Sisters and Brothers, be Father and Visitor, and also the Judge in all cases and causes touching the Sisters or Brothers. Him it behoveth to be a careful and diligent beholder continually if the Rule and the Constitutions be observed in all points, that it happen not these wholesome statutes be forgotten by any of the Brothers or Sisters. The Prince of the kingdom or land in which the Monastery is shall be to them surety and defender in all needs, and the Pope is above both, that is, the Prince of the land and the Bishop; he shall be their charitable tutor if they ask his help any need compelling. Who that will make a Monastery of this Order, must in no wise presume it without the will and license of the Pope; furthermore, these Constitutions confirmed by the Pope, there shall be sought some devout Brothers of the Rule of Saint Benedict or Saint Bernard, who adding to these Constitutions must write in:—

How excesses are to be amended in the Monastery;

How the Sisters and Brothers dying there, are to be buried;

How the Bishop shall visit; and

For what cases the Bishop must enter the Monastery.

Of persons, as doctors and workmen who ought to labour or repair anything in the Monastery.

It must be added to, also of the election of the Abbess, of the manner of ordering offices, and places in which silence is to be kept must be expressed as Church, Choir, Refectory, Dormitory, and other places.

And all other things necessary to regular observance which be not contained in this Constitution to its perfection and strength must be taken of the Rules above said.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

THAT A GRAVE OUGHT ALWAYS TO BE OPEN IN THE MONASTERY
AND A BIER BEFORE THE ENTRANCE OF THE CHURCH INTO
CLOISTER.

A pit to the likeness of a grave must be had in the Monastery in due place each day open, to which after Terce every day, Festival and Ferial, the Sisters must go out. And the Abbess casting out of the pit a little earth with two fingers, they must say the Psalm "De Profundis" with a Collect under this form :—

"Lord, Holy Father, that keepest the body which Thy Son took of the Virgin Mary unhurt in the grave, and raised it incorrupt, we beseech Thee to keep our bodies clean and undefiled in Thy Holy Service, and order so our ways in this time, that when the great and dreadful day of doom cometh, our bodies may be raised up amongst Thy Saints, and our souls rejoice with Thee everlastingly, and deserve fellowship with Thy chosen. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

A bier, upon which a little earth is put, must be set before the entrance of the Church continually, where it may always be seen of them that enter, that seeing it they may have in mind the remembrance of death, and think in their hearts that they be earth and to earth they shall return.

HERE ENDETH THE RULE OF OUR SAVIOUR.

THE RULE OF ST. AUSTIN.

CHAPTER I.

MOST DEAR SISTERS, BEFORE ALL THINGS GOD BE LOVED AND THEN
YOUR NEIGHBOUR : FOR THESE COMMANDMENTS BE PRINCIPALLY
GIVEN UNTO US. THEREFORE, THESE BOTH THINGS WE
COMMEND YOU TO KEEP, THAT BE ORDAINED TO
LIVE TOGETHER IN THE MONASTERY.

The first thing for which you be gathered together in one is, as you dwell in one home, so you be of one will, one soul, and one heart in Our Lord. And that you have nothing proper, but all things be common to you. And meat and drink and clothing be distributed to each of you of your Sovereign Abbess as need is, not evenly to all, for you be not all alike strong, but to each as need is. For so you read in the Acts of the Apostles that all things were common to them, and it was distributed to each as need was to each. And they that had anything in the world, be they glad and well pleased that it be common when they be entered into the Monastery. And they that had naught in the world, seek they not in the Monastery those things that they might not have while they were without.

But yet, if that is needful to their infirmity or sustenance, it must be given unto them, though their poverty, while they were without, might not find for their use that were needful unto them.

And yet ought they not, therefore, to hold themselves the better or more blessed for that they have found meat, and drink and clothing, such as they might not get without, neither be the prouder for that they be associated to such as they durst not come nigh while they were without.

But have they their hearts upward, and to seek they no mere earthly things, lest the Monasteries be profitable to the rich, and not to the poor, if the rich become meek there, and the poor more proud.

CHAPTER II.

OF HUMILITY.

Also, again, beware they that seemed to be ought in the world, have they not in disdain the Sisters that be come from poverty unto that Holy Company.

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But rather study they to be glad, joyful, not of the worthiness of their rich kin, but of the fellowship of the poor brethren.

Neither bear they them the higher, though they have given ought of their goods to the common life, nor be more proud of their riches, for that they have apportioned them to the Monastery than if they had used them in the world.

For every other wickedness is seen in evil deeds that they do, but pride lieth in wait to good works that they perish.

And what availeth it to depart and to give unto the poor, and to be poor, while the wretched soul is made more proud in forsaking of riches than it was in having them.

Therefore, love ye all in oneness of will, and one heart, and worship God each one of you in the other Whose temples you be made.

CHAPTER III.

OF PRAYER.

Attend inwardly to prayer in such hours and times as be ordained thereto. And in the place, that is to say, the Church or Choir, let none do there but that for which it is made, and that is prayer. Wherefore, it hath the name.

And if peradventure some would pray there beside the hours ordained therefore, other duties and chants done, let them come there that they be troubled not by others who have aught to do.

And when you pray unto God in psalm and hymn, think carefully in your heart the same thing that you say or sing with your mouth.

And sing not but that, that you read should be sung.

And that, that if so written that it should not be sung, sing it not.

CHAPTER IV.

OF FASTING AND MODERATION, AND OF THE CARE OF THEM THAT BE SICK.

Tame your flesh with fastings and abstinence of food and drink, as much as your strength will suffer, and when anyone of you may not fast, yet she shall not eat out of meal times but if she be sick. When you go to meat, hear without noise or strife that, that is of custom read unto you unto the time that you rise, so that not only your mouth take its meat, but that your ears also hunger and desire the Word of God.

And if they that be oft wont to be sick be otherwise treated in meat or drink, they whose former custom hath made strong, ought not

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to envy them thereof, or think it unrightful. Nor ought they to hold themselves better or more happy for that they take other meat than they. But rather be they glad in themselves that they be stronger than others be. And also if any meat or drink, clothing, or bedding be given unto them that be come to the Monastery from delicate nurturing that is not given to others that be strong, therefore more happy be they that it is not given unto, and they ought to think how low that the other be come down from the secular life unto this life, though they may not attain to the abasement of them that be stronger in body. Neither ought all to will to take the same largeness that they see a few take, for it is not to do them honour, but out of sufferance. And why? Lest loathful frowardness or contradiction happen to fall in the Monastery where inasmuch as they may, the rich be made laborious by too great straightness of diet, and the poor labour to be dissolute and delicate. And like as it behoveth to them that be sick to take fearfully and little, so after their sickness they ought to be treated as they may soonest be recovered, yet, though they be come from the lowest of poverty of the world, and as if their late sickness had been given unto them as custom hath given to the rich.

But when they have recovered their first or wonted strength, turn they again unto their better and first custom; the which is so much the more seemly for the servants of God, as they have less need, so that desire of meals hold them not, when they are recovered, whom need relieved while they were sick. For they must hold those most rich which be most strong in suffering. For it is better to have somewhat less than needeth, than to have anything more than needeth.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE HABIT, AND OF RELIGIOUS BEARING.

Let not your habit be notable, and desire not to please with clothing but with good manners.

When you go anywhither, go two together, and when you come thereto abide and stand together.

And in your going, standing, habit or clothing, and in all the movements of your body, show you good conversation, and do nothing that shall offend any man ought, but do all things as it beseemeth your holy profession to do. Though your eyes hap to be cast on any person, let them not abide in beholding of any.

If any of you espy in others any evil habit, anon warn such, that it go no further but that it be left and amended. And if you see

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such do the same after she is warned, then whoever may find it tell she it out openly as they wounded to be made whole. Nevertheless, if it be told openly, it is to be showed to one or two, that she may be corrected by the mouth of two or three witnesses and be reprehended by due correction.

And deem not yourself evil-willed when you tell out such things, for you sin more if you suffer a Sister to perish by your silence, whom you might correct and amend by telling and showing of the trespass. For if thy Sister had a wound in her body that she would to be hidden and unknown for she dreaded to be hurt, were it not cruelly done of thee to hide it, and mercifully done of thee to tell it? How much more rather than ought thou to show her sin that is festering, that it root not worse in her heart?

But yet before you show it to others by whom she should be corrected if she denied it, first after thou hast warned her alone if she will not amend so, then thou oughtest to show it to her Sovereign that it may be amended by her more privately and not to be known to others. But if she deny it other than one ought to be brought before all, that she may not only be accused of two witnesses but be convicted of two or three. And when she be corrected she ought to suffer penance to the punishing of her sin and to her amendment, and that, after the judgment of the Abbess, Priest or Bishop, to whose dispensation the judgment belongeth.

And if she refuse to suffer her penance, though she go not away by herself, cast her out and arrest her from fellowship. And that is not cruelly done but mercifully, lest that by her deadly infection she infect many.

And this that I have said be it kept faithfully and truly.

CHAPTER VI.

OF ADMONITION AND CORRECTION.

Whosoever fall into so great evil that she taketh secretly of any person letters or any other gift, if she acknowledgeth it by her own free will, spare her, and pray for her. If any be taken therewith and convicted, then be she punished more grievously after the judgment of her Abbess.

Have your clothes together under one keeper, or two or more, that may suffice to shake and keep them that they be not hurt of moths.

And as ye be all fed of one cellar, so be ye clad of one vestiary.

And if it may be reckoned what clothing is given unto you, according to the time of the year, which of you receive again what she

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left off, or else other what another had, so that it be not denied to each of you as it is needful.

And if it happen here strife and complaining to arise among you, when any of you complaineth her for she taketh worse clothing than she left off, thinketh herself evil served that she is not so well clad as her other Sister is clad, here prove yourself how much lacketh you of the holy inward clothing of the heart and soul, that striveth for the clothing of the body.

Nevertheless, if your frailty be suffered to receive the same clothing that you left off, yet have the clothing that you leave off and occupy not, in common place under common keeper's charge.

Also none of you work anything to her own use, but all your works be done in common for the common profit, and that you more study quietness and gladness than if each one of you should make it for herself alone. For charity, of which it is written that she seeketh not her own, is thus understood, that charity prefereth common things to those proper, and not proper before the common. And, therefore, the more you set by common things before your own proper things, so much the more know you that you profit.

So that in all the things which this transitory need useth, charity that ever abideth, be always preferred and set above. Therefore it followeth that when any man giveth any clothes or any other needful thing to his daughter or any of his friends that be in the Monastery, be it not taken privately, but be it in the power of the Abbess to put it amongst the common things and to give it to her that hath need.

And if any hide or conceal anything that is given her, be she condemned by the judgment of theft.

CHAPTER VII.

OF KEEPING THE CLOTHING IN COMMON, AND OF THE CARE OF THE SICK.

Whether your clothes be washed of yourselves or of labourers, be they washed after the will and judgment of your Abbess, that too great desire of clean clothing without, draw not unclean clothing to the soul within.

Baths also shall not be denied when need or sickness requireth. They must be taken without complaining at all times when the doctor orders; so that at the command of the Abbess, a Sister, even if otherwise she will not, must do what is needful for the recovery or saving of her health. But if any desire to make use of any remedy when it is inexpedient, her desire shall not be followed. Sometimes it is thought to profit, though of truth there is none.

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And if sickness or disease be hid in the body of the servant of God, saying that she is sick or diseased, she is to be believed without any doubt. But whether that, that she desireth be profitable or expedient to heal the sickness or no be uncertain, a physician must be consulted.

And she that hath need to go anywhither ought not to go with such as she will, but with such as the Abbess biddeth.

The cure and charge of them that be sick or of them that is to be refreshed after their sickness, or of them that be labouring with any sickness or fever, will be committed and enjoined to some one the while, who shall order at the cellar, or at the common place where necessaries be kept for the common life, such things that she seeth needful unto each.

They that be keepers of the cellar or such a place, and also of the clothes, or else of the books, shall serve the Sisters without any complaining. Books be asked each day at a certain hour, and she that asketh for them out of time shall not have them.

When clothing, hose, or shoes be necessary to her that hath need they that have the keeping of such things as be asked, ought to make no delays or tarrying to give them.

Strife and debates, look that you have either none at all, or else that ye make an end in all haste, lest that wrath grow into hatred and make a "mote" into a "beam," and thy Sister's soul become a murderess, for you read: "He that hateth his brother is a murderer."

If any of you hurt another with reproachful word, or by upbraiding her for her faults, have she to cure with satisfaction that the which she hath done, and she that is hurt be ready to forgive the offence without fraud or delay.

And if either of them hurt the other, either of them ought to forgive the other, and this rather for your prayers ought to be so much the more holy as you have them more frequently than others.

For she is better, who though she be often tempted with wrath, will haste her to get forgiveness of her to whom she knoweth she hath done wrong, than she that is longer to wrath, and also longer or unwilling to ask any forgiveness. And she who will not ask forgiveness, or else asketh it not of heart, is without cause in the Monastery, though she be not cast or put out thereof.

Wherefore, keep you straightly from sharp, unkind words which if they happen to pass out of your mouth, be not loth to

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make medicine of the same mouth by asking forgiveness with meek words, by the which mouth were made words of hurting and ill words.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE ABBESS.

When the need of discipline in reproving of ill manner compelleth you to say sharp words, though all ye feel or perceive that you have exceeded and passed the measure in your saying, yet it is not required of you that you ask forgiveness of your subjects, lest that the authority of your government suffer, while meekness is kept overmuch amongst them which ought to be subject. Nevertheless, forgiveness is to be asked of Him that is Lord above all, Who knoweth with how much devotedness you love her whom you correct more severely than is right. For spiritual love ought to be amongst you and not carnal love.

Obey your Abbess as a Mother, but much more obey your Bishop that beareth the care of you.

Therefore, we command you that all these things be kept, so that if anything be not kept be it not recklessly overpassed, but that your Abbess take heed that it be corrected and amended. And it shall belong to your Head to tell and show to the Bishop, whose authority is more such things the which pass her measure and power.

And she that is your Abbess deem not herself the more happy and blessed for her power and dominion, but rather for her service and abundant charity. Your Abbess be had in worship amongst you, but hold she herself in dread amongst you, and in her own mind under your feet.

Show she herself at all times virtuous of life and example of good works to all. Blame and chastise she them that be unrestful and comfort she such as be weak-hearted and fearful, favour she them that seek support, be patient unto all.

Be she glad and ready to put unto herself sharpness and discipline of penance whereby she may better execute and put it to others, and cause therewith fear and dread. And though both be needful, yet desire more to be loved than feared, thinking always that she shall yield a reckoning and account for you unto God.

And therefore obey you the more unto her, having mercy and compassion not only on yourself, but also upon her who standeth amongst you in so much the more peril as that she standeth in higher place and degree.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE OBSERVANCE OF THE RULE.

God grant that you keep all these things as lovers of spiritual beauty, and by your spiritual conversation be filled with the good

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odour of Christ ; not as slaves under the law, but as free children under grace.

And that you may behold you in this little book as in a mirror, lest you be negligent of anything by forgetfulness, be it read unto you each week once.

And when you find that you do these things that here be written give thanks unto God, Giver of all goodness. And when, you or any of you seeth anything they in it fail, be she sorry of what is past, and be she ware of that which is to come, praying that the debt of her trespass be forgiven her, and that she be not brought into temptation. Amen.

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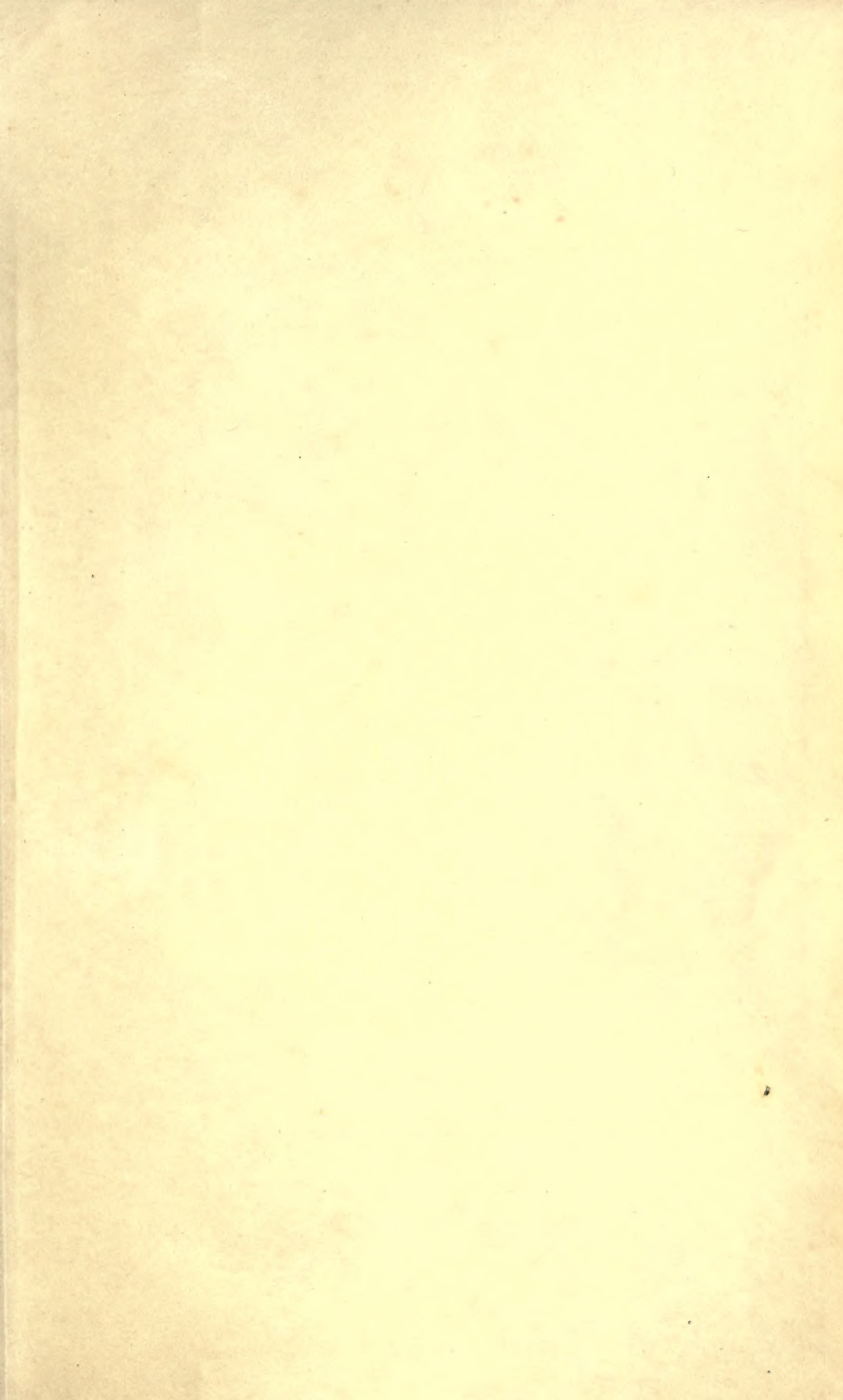
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